

THE LAW AND
THE GOSPEL

ATKINS

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REV. A. H. ATKINS

The Law and the Gospel

BY

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DANIELSVILLE, GA.

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To
My Wife
Eula Hubbard Atkins
this Volume
is Lovingly Dedicated
By the Author

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Preface

MOST of the sermons contained in this volume were published in religious and secular papers. They were read by some who, by reason of sickness or the infirmities of age, could not attend upon the ordinances of God's house. These persons and many others testified that the sermons were a means of great spiritual benefit to them. For this reason the author decided to give them to the public in a more permanent form. He desires to do all the good he possibly can. The ambassador of Christ should, as far as possible, preach the gospel, not only with his lips and his life, but through the printed page. Many are prejudiced against doctrinal discourses. For this reason the author has avoided the discussion of doctrine. One who examined the manuscript writes: "Your manuscript of sermons has now had our thoughtful examination and consideration. We are pleased to note that they cover a very considerable range of subjects, and deal with problems of the christian life and character in a practical, straight-forward and unequivocal manner. He who runs may read the religious and spiritual principles involved in these wholesome discourses." As the sermons in the first chapters of the volume are on some of the commandments and the other sermons are on gospel themes, the author could not think of a better title than the one given to it, viz.: "The Law and the Gospel." It is sent forth with a sincere prayer that it may prove helpful to all who read it.

A. H. ATKINS.

Danielsville, Ga., June 28, 1915.

Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.—Exodus 20:3

OUR Saviour on one occasion called this the greatest commandment. It is the greatest commandment because obedience to it includes obedience to the other commandments. He who disobeys this commandment disobeys the other commandments. The first five commandments teach us our duty to God. The other five our duty to our fellow-man. He who does not discharge his duty to God fails to discharge his duty to his fellow-man.

Our Saviour again tells us that this is the first commandment. It is the first for antiquity. Before the moral law was given this commandment was given. Before the world was created God gave this commandment to the angels. He did not say to them, "Thou shalt not kill," or "Thou shalt not steal," for it was not possible for them to do such things, but He did say to them, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

This commandment is the first for dignity. Disobedience to this commandment is a greater sin than disobedience to the other commandments.

The man who kills, or steals commits a great sin, but the man who refuses to acknowledge and

worship God commits a greater sin. Sins against God are greater sins than sins against our fellow-man. This commandment is first for justice. Men may find it difficult to see why they should love their fellow-man as themselves, but they will find no difficulty in seeing why they should love God. Their conscience and their reason tell them that they should have no other gods before Him. To obey this commandment means to love Him.

Thousands fail to do this. There is the atheist who hates Him to such an extent that he would dethrone Him if he could. There are others, who, while they do not deny His existence, have no real love for Him. They never bow the knee to Him, never enter His house, never read His Word, never give to His cause, and never speak a word for Him. They do not side with the atheist against Him, but they are indifferent to Him. They neglect Him and, therefore, have no real love for Him. Then, there are those, who, while they do all of these things, do them with no degree of pleasure. God's service to them is burdensome. To obey this commandment means to love God supremely. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength." How many come far short of doing this! He who permits any person or thing to occupy that place in his heart that God should occupy fails to obey this commandment.

The children of Israel failed to obey this commandment when they bowed down to the gods of the land. God gave this commandment to them because He saw that there was great danger of their worshipping the gods of the surrounding nations. Some worshipped animals, others worshipped the moon and the stars, and still others worshipped idols. How many in this age are bowing down to false gods! Some are worshipping money. There are few things that they would not do to secure it. They endure hardships, expose themselves to dangers, utter falsehoods, steal and even commit murder in order to get money. It is only necessary for one to glance at secular papers in order to see what great sins men commit in order to come into possession of money. Men who have been for years respected and honored and trusted, commit robbery in order to secure money. Their god is wealth. Others are worshipping the favor of man. They are willing to incur the disfavor of God in order to secure the favor of man. They are exerting themselves to the utmost to attain honors. They jeopardize their lives, and bribe, and utter falsehoods, and do worse in order to attain fame.

The conduct of Cook is an illustration of what men will do to secure fame. Worldly pleasure is the god of many. They would sacrifice reputation and character rather than give up certain worldly pleasures. They engage in pleasures that

they know the Bible teaches are sinful. It is possible for men to make a god out of innocent pleasure. If we enjoy it to the neglect of our souls we worship it.

Many worship sensual pleasure. The drunkard loves strong drink more than he loves himself, for he indulges in it when he knows that he is bringing suffering upon himself. He loves it more than he loves his family, for he knows that by indulging in it he brings want and suffering upon them. Sins of the flesh are the god of the lascivious person. He indulges in such sins when he knows that God has declared that no whoremonger shall enter the kingdom of heaven.

Many a man worships himself. He thinks that no one is equal to himself in reputation, in character and in things that pertain to this world. He burns incense to his deity and expects others to do the same. God gives some reasons why we should have no other gods before Him.

I. Because He is God. He is the source of all existence and of wisdom and power. He is infinite in wisdom, power, justice, goodness and truth. He is the all-wise, all-powerful, all-sufficient, eternal, Omnipresent and Omniscient God—the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Exceedingly foolish then are men when they prefer to worship things that perish to worshipping the great God.

II. Another reason that God gives why we should have no other gods before Him, is because He is *our* God. "I am *thy* God," He declared to the children of Israel. He substantially said to them, "I sustain a relation to you that I do not sustain to any other nation. The covenant I entered into with your fathers I entered into with you. Not only did I obligate myself to do certain things but you obligated yourselves to do certain things. You said, 'All that the Lord has said we will do.' If then you worship other gods you fail to fulfill very solemn obligations.

1. He is ours by creation. Should we blaspheme Him with the lips that He created? And should we use our hands, and our feet, and our talents, and our time in the service of Satan His enemy? If children should serve their parents much more should we serve the One who created our bodies out of the dust of the earth and breathed into our nostrils the breath of life.

2. He is ours by preservation. Had He not preserved us we would have long since passed into eternity. Indeed, our souls would have long since perished. The air that we breath, the clothes that we wear, and the food that we eat are His gifts. Should the horse that you feed, and the servants that you feed and clothe and train, serve you? Much

more should we serve the One who not only created us, but who preserves us.

3. He is ours by redemption. He has done more for us than He did for the children of Israel. He brought them from under the bondage of the Egyptians. He has brought us from under the bondage of sin and Satan. He gave up His only begotten Son to die for us "that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

We were bought not with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of God's Son.

Both our bodies and our souls have been redeemed by reason of the obedience and death of the blessed Son of God. Should we not use them in His service? Let us examine our hearts. Are we worshipping any of the gods that have been mentioned? God help us to have no other gods before Him.

III. Another reason we find in God's Word why we should not worship false gods is because they are nothing—vanity. Isaiah calls them the vanity of the nations. Moses declared that they could neither speak, nor eat, nor see, nor smell. Isaiah declared that eyes they had, but they saw not; ears they had, but they heard not; mouths they had, but they spoke not. The false gods that have

been mentioned—the things of the world—are nothing.

1. Because they are transient. They change as the clouds above you—not presenting the same appearance from one moment to another. The thread that holds such things may be compared to the thread with which the spider weaves its web. Money takes wings and flies away. Fame and pleasure are as transient. They are here to-day and gone to-morrow.

2. They are nothing because they are unsatisfying. People who enjoy them feel as did the boy who, after securing a nest by risking his life, found that it contained nothing. How empty are the things of this world! Solomon had all that heart could wish. What was his verdict? “All is vanity and vexation of spirit.” One of the richest men that ever lived declared that his wealth was a source of no pleasure to him. He declared that while he had a fine house it afforded him no pleasure, and that while his table was loaded with luxuries he could not eat them. We think the kings of the earth are the happiest people in the world, but there is much truth in the words, “Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown.”

IV. We should not worship false gods, because when we do we reflect dishonor upon the cause of God. God’s purpose in bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt with a mighty hand was that

the other nations might see that He was God. How could they expect them to see this when they worshipped the gods of the land? How can professing christians expect the people of the world to be influenced in favor of their religion when they worship the things of the world? The way to glorify God is to let their light shine. How many people are influenced to believe that there is no power in the christian religion because of the inconsistencies of professing christians! How many weak christians are injured by reason of their inconsistent walk and conversation! Our Saviour pronounced a curse upon those by whom offences come. The Apostle Paul declared that if eating meat caused his brother to offend he would eat no meat.

Destroy not him with your meat for whom Christ died. Let your conduct be such as that others will take knowledge of you that you have been with Jesus.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.—Ex. 20:7

LET us consider the prohibition and the warning in this text.

1. The prohibition. “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.”

The name of God expresses his character. Therefore, when men speak lightly and irreverently of his name they speak thus of Him. When they speak lightly and contemptuously of their fellow-men they insult them. Much more do they insult God when they speak thus of Him. God’s name is that by which He makes himself known. Therefore, when men speak irreverently of anything by which He makes himself known they speak thus of Him.

God makes himself known through His Word. Therefore, when men speak irreverently of His Word, or jest about it, or when they make it appear in a ridiculous light by putting a false interpretation upon it, they take His name in vain. We should speak as respectfully and as reverently of God’s Word as we do of Him.

God makes himself known through His providential dealings with men. When they, therefore, speak lightly of such dealings, they take His name in vain.

How many do this! People do not realize when they refuse to bow submissively to God's will that they take His name in vain.

God makes himself known through the worship of His house. When people, therefore, assume a careless and an irreverent attitude during the worship of God's house they take His name in vain.

If you talk and laugh during the worship of God's house, my hearers, you are guilty of profanity. Ministers who preach in a way to cause laughter in the house of God are greatly responsible for the irreverence shown at such a time. The house of God is not the place for laughter.

“Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be ready to utter anything before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.”

God makes himself known through His church.

When men, therefore, speak irreverently of God's people, they take His name in vain. A young man was once heard to curse the members and officers of a certain church. God sent one judgment

after another upon him, and he is now in his grave. The man who curses the people of God may expect the curse of God to descend upon him. That we may see more clearly what is prohibited in the words of our text, let us consider some occasions on which men use God's name.

1. They use God's name when they make a public profession of their faith.

That name requires them to depart from iniquity. If they fail to do this they take this name in vain.

How many are taking the name of God in vain by hypocrisy! Our Saviour declared that the worship of such people is vain. "Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, 'This people honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.'" Isaiah tells us that the oblations of such people are vain. "Bring no more vain oblations, incense is an abomination to me." James tells us that the religion of such people is vain. "If any man thinketh himself to be religious while he bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain."

Many people are taking God's name in vain every moment of their lives. Every time they speak a word or do an act that is unbecoming in a servant of God they take God's name in vain, since they fail to practice the religion they profess.

2. People use God's name when they enter into a covenant with Him.

Most of us have entered into a covenant with Him.

Members of the church did so when they united with the church, officers of the church did so when they were installed in their responsible offices.

Parents did so when they presented their children for baptism. Husband and wife did so when they were united in the bonds of matrimony. When people fail to keep these vows they take God's name in vain. "When thou voweth a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for He hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldst not vow, than that shouldst vow and not pay."

3. Men use God's name when they swear by it. It is not wrong to swear by God's name; provided, you do so at the proper time, or when it is necessary to do so.

The children of Israel were required to swear by God's name at certain times. The Apostles did so. Christ did so before Caiaphas. God swore by His own name because He could swear by no greater. When men, however, swear by God's name when they are not called upon to do so, they take it in vain.

Such expressions as I declare, I vow, I swear are profanity.

4. Men use God's name when they swear by it falsely. They do this in courts of justice. They do it in private conversation. They then take God's name in vain.

5. They use God's name in private conversation. When they use it irreverently they take it in vain. Such expression as my goodness, my gracious, good Lord, high heavens are profanity.

6. They use it when they invoke God's curse upon men. Whether they use God's name or not, if they invoke on men that which only God can send on them, they take God's name in vain.

The commandment reaches the thoughts of men. If they think unkindly or irreverently of God they take His name in vain.

II. Let us consider in the second place the warning we find in the words of the text. The warning is that God will not hold guiltless the man who takes His name in vain.

Disobedience to this command is a great sin. The command is in the first table of the law. The penalty visited upon men for violating this command was death. The son of the Israelitish woman who blasphemed God's name was put to death. The Israelites regarded the sin such a great one that they were afraid to use the word Jehovah in conversation. When God's name was taken in vain in their presence they tore their garments and placed their hands upon the person who committed the

sin, thus indicating that he only must bear the guilt. The penalty inflicted upon Uzzah, Uzziah, and Belshazzar for this sin was death. My friends, you walk on dangerous ground when you take God's name in vain. God is just as just now as He has ever been. He must punish sin in order to satisfy the demands of His justice and in order to preserve the interest of His moral government. While He is merciful, He will not permit the standard of mercy to be planted upon the grave of justice. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

Remember the Sabbath and keep it Holy.—Exodus 20:8

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days thou shalt labour and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work; thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day, wherefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.—Ex. 20: 8, 9, 10, 12.

NOTHING is more sadly neglected to-day than the observance of the Sabbath. Few observe it properly. In considering the observance of the Sabbath there are two questions we should answer:

1st. How should we observe the Sabbath?

2nd. Why should we thus observe it?

I. How should we observe the Sabbath?

1. We should observe it as a day of rest.

Six days shalt thou LABOR and do ALL thy WORK. The fact that the Lord rested on that day is a reason why we should do so. We should imitate His example. The words also teach us that even if we do not work on the Sabbath, but require our children or our servants, or our animals to do so we desecrate it.

It is never necessary for men to work on the Sabbath in order to supply themselves and their families with the necessaries of life. Had God known that it was necessary He would not have given the command. He is wiser than man.

The words do not forbid works of mercy and necessity. Our Saviour's words, "Man was not made for the Sabbath, but the Sabbath for man" teach us this. The Pharisees had false views as to the observance of the Sabbath. They believed that the command should be obeyed as to the letter—that not even works of mercy and necessity should be performed on the Lord's day. Christ taught that it was lawful to do such things on the Sabbath—that the spirit of the law should be obeyed. The words, however, do not teach that men may do as much work and take as much pleasure as they please on the Sabbath. According to such reasoning we would have a right to say that because animals were made for man he may steal as many as he pleases. The Sabbath is ours to use lawfully. Let us remember that we do not do works of necessity when after we have neglected to do certain things on Saturday, or some other day, it becomes necessary for us to do them on the Sabbath. Nor do we perform works of necessity when we do on the Sabbath what we could well postpone doing until the next day.

2. We should observe the Sabbath as a day of worship. The shorter catechism tells us "that the

Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day even from such wordly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship except so much as to be taken up in works of necessity and mercy."

We are told that the Lord hallowed the Sabbath day. To hallow means to separate from a common to a sacred use. We do not separate the Sabbath from a common to a sacred use when we do on that day works we do on other days, and when we engage in pleasures on that day that we engage in on other days. Nor do we separate this day from a common to a sacred use when we fail to engage in the private and public worship of God. However much you rest your bodies and your minds, and however much you refrain from engaging in worldly pleasures on the Sabbath, if you on that day neglect the private and public worship of God you desecrate it. Since the purpose of the Sabbath and the church is the same—the spiritual benefit of man—it should be kept as a day of worship. Men, therefore, make a mistake when, while they admit that no secular work should be done on the Sabbath, claim that it is lawful to engage in secular amusements on that day. If the interest of man's soul is interfered with when he performs secular work on the Sabbath, why is it not interfered with when he engages in secular amusements on that day?

II. Why should the Sabbath be observed as a day of rest and worship?

1. Because it is a divine institution.

If the Sabbath had been instituted by man we might do as we please as regards observing it. But since God instituted it we are under obligation to STRICTLY observe it.

The Word of God shows that He instituted it.

It was the law of Eden. It was observed in the wilderness as shown by the fact that the Israelites were required to gather twice as much manna on the sixth day as they did on other days. Pharaoh, in his vision, saw seven years of plenty and of want. Solomon waited seven years to build the temple. Balaam offered seven sacrifices on seven altars. Allusions are constantly made to it. The walls of Jericho were encompassed seven days by seven priests, bearing seven trumpets, and seven times on the seventh day. The ark rested on Mt. Ararat in the seventh month. We read of seven churches, seven candlesticks, seven trumpets, seven seals, seven spirits, seven angels, seven vials and the seven last plagues.

That the Sabbath was not abolished with the Jewish ceremonial may be seen first by the fact that it was not intended only for the Jews. It was intended for every member of the human family.

Moses declared that it was blessed and hallowed at the beginning. This shows that it was intended for all men. Our Saviour declared that it was made for man. The reason that God gives why the Sabbath should be observed, is because He created the heavens and the earth in six days and rested the seventh. Man should rest on the seventh day because God did so. Is it any more the duty of the Jews to do this than other people? It is the duty of every man to imitate the example of his God. Again, the fact that the Sabbath formed no part of the ceremonial law of the Jews is a proof that it was not abolished with it. The ceremonial law was abolished because its types were fulfilled. But the Sabbath can form no part of the ceremonial law because its type has not been fulfilled.

Again, the Sabbath was incorporated in the moral law—the immortal ten commandments. The way in which this law was promulgated and the place in which it was deposited show plainly that it can never pass away. It was spoken in an audible voice by God himself from the summit of Mt. Sinai, in the presence of the children of Israel. It was written by His own fingers on enduring stone, thereby indicating its permanency. By the express command of God it was placed in the ark of the covenant, *directly* under the overshadowing mercy seat—the symbolic throne of God, which plainly indicated that

it was as impossible for it to pass away as it was for the throne of God to fall into ruins.

The New Testament teaches that the Sabbath law is still in force. It was Christ's custom to stand up in the synagogues on the Sabbath to read the Scriptures. Luke 4: 16—We are told that Paul reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath. Acts 18: 4—He went out on the Sabbath and preached to Lydia and other women at Philippi. He preached at Antioch on the Sabbath, and was asked by the Jews to preach the same words on the coming Sabbath. The same regard was had for the day when it was changed from the seventh to the *first day* of the week. Jesus appeared to His disciples for the first time after His resurrection on the first day of the week. It was on the evening of the same day that he appeared to them and breathed on them the Holy Ghost. It was the first day of the week that the Holy Ghost was poured out. Paul ordered collections to be taken in the church of Corinth, as he had directed to be done in the churches of Galatia on the first day of the week. It was on the first day of the week that John was rapt in an Apocalyptic vision on the Isle of Patmos.

The sacredness of the day was not at all diminished, when it was changed from the seventh to the first day of the week. Before the change was made it commemorated the creation and the deliverance

of the children of Israel *from* their bondage in Egypt. It was proper and due Christ that His resurrection should be commemorated by the observance of the Sabbath. By the change, therefore, the sacredness of the day was increased rather than diminished.

2. Another reason why the Sabbath should be observed as a day of rest and worship is because man needs it. They who will not admit that it is a divine institution admit that it is highly necessary for men to rest one day out of seven. During the French revolution when infidels endeavored to overthrow the christian religion, it was found necessary to set aside every tenth day as a day of rest. After a time the day of rest was changed from this day back to the seventh. Men as truly need the rest of the Sabbath as they do the *rest of* the night. Just as they would wreck their health if they should fail to take the rest of the night, so would they if they failed to observe the Sabbath as a day of rest. It has been discovered by experiment, both in this country and abroad, that the bodies of both men and beasts last longer and do more work when they rest on the Sabbath than when they do not. Men make a mistake when they suppose that they gain by working on the Lord's day. Just as the traveler saves time by resting at noon, and just as the reaper saves time by stopping to whet his scythe, so men gain rather than lose when they observe the Sab-

bath as a day of rest. Your business will never prosper if you engage in it on the Lord's day. If your body does not receive the rest that God intended it to have you will soon be unable to carry on your business. Just as the bow unstrung soon loses its elasticity, so will your body lose its strength and vigor if you give it no rest.

3. It is to man's spiritual interest to observe the Sabbath as a day of rest and worship. Man's soul, as well as his mind and body, needs the rest of the Sabbath. It needs to rest from care and anxiety—a time in which to commune with its God and in which to think of things eternal. If it is difficult for us to advance the interest of our souls when we are blessed with the sanctifying influence of the Sabbath, how could we do so if we were deprived of this influence? Experience teaches that the more faithfully we observe the Sabbath, the nearer we are drawn to God. Besides, every one must admit that the friends of the Sabbath are the people of God and that its enemies are the children of the devil. Nothing proves more strongly than this, that the Sabbath is essential to man's spiritual and eternal interest. Healthy men prefer substantial food to that which is not. Accordingly, the fact that people who are healthy spiritually are in love with the Sabbath is a proof that it is essential to their growth in grace.

4. The observance of the Sabbath as a day of rest and worship is essential to national prosperity.

If the morals of men are not good there cannot be good government, and if there is not good government there cannot be national prosperity. What now is more essential to good morals than the religion of Christ? If the religion of Christ were overthrown this world would be a hell. Murders, adulteries and thefts are committed now; God's name and Sabbath are profaned now, but if the christian religion were blotted out of existence such sins would be committed as they never have been before.

But how could the christian religion exist without the church? And how could the church exist without a set time for the observance of its ordinances? The idolatry of the heathen would not be preserved if its rites were not celebrated at set times. The different orders would pass out of existence if they had no stated meetings and no public exhibitions. The reason why Jewish feasts and ceremonies were appointed, and why there were frequent public gatherings was because it was only in that way that the Jews could preserve their religion. It was when the Jewish altars were broken down and Jewish festivals ceased that the nation lapsed into idolatry. Just so, if the church had not a set time for the observance of its ordinances it would soon pass out of existence.

5. We should observe the Sabbath as a day of rest and worship because if we fail to do so we will bring great guilt upon our souls.

Since the Sabbath is of divine origin it is plain that we commit a great sin when we do not observe it. If the President of the United States should appoint a certain day as a day of Thanksgiving we would do him a great injustice if we should refuse to observe it. A greater injustice is done God when men refuse to observe the Sabbath as a day of rest and worship. They dishonor Him in that they deny Him the right to appoint a day of rest and worship.

Again, Sabbath desecration is a great sin because when men commit it they commit theft against God. They commit a greater sin when they refuse to observe the Sabbath properly, than when they commit theft against their fellow-man.

Again, Sabbath desecration is a great sin because it is not one of ignorance. Men know that they sin when they refuse to observe the Sabbath. They cannot plead ignorance of the law of the Sabbath. They are plainly taught how to observe it. They then deliberately and wilfully sin when they desecrate God's day. They sin against light and knowledge.

Again, Sabbath desecration is a great sin in that men show great ingratitude to God in committing it. Ingratitude is one of the greatest of sins. God's

word tells us that it is characteristic of the wicked. Do not men show great ingratitude to God when after He has given them six days in which to engage in pleasure and labor they take from Him the day that He has set aside for Himself? The Sabbath commemorates the resurrection of the Saviour—the conclusion of the work of redemption. Men show great ingratitude to God, then, in refusing to observe it in that they refuse to celebrate the resurrection of the Son of God.

Again, Sabbath desecration is a great sin because in committing it we sin against ourselves. We injure ourselves physically, mentally, morally, spiritually, and every other way. Sabbath desecration is a great sin because of the injury we inflict upon others when we commit it. We exert an influence for evil over others. We deprive them of some of their dearest privileges.

Since Sabbath desecration is such a great sin, great punishment will necessarily be inflicted upon those that commit it. Punishment that men suffer is always in proportion to the guilt that they incur. That the guilt that they incur in desecrating the Sabbath is great is evident from the fact that the penalty attached to that sin under the old dispensation was death. The man who was found gathering sticks on the Sabbath was stoned to death. God has not changed. He loves His day as much as He ever did. He is no slower in punishing men for

desecrating His day than He was under the old dispensation. We cannot tell in how many ways we will suffer if we desecrate the Sabbath. God may take our health, or our property, or our loved ones from us. We may be cursed with ungodly children and with unsuccessful business. We will certainly have a guilty conscience, a weary heart and poor spiritual health.

Thou shalt not kill

—Exodus 20:13

WE WILL notice, first:

I. Some things these words do not forbid:

1. They do not forbid homicide in self-defense. Such killing is not done through hatred, or malice, or feelings of revenge. It is this kind of killing that the commandment forbids. Self-preservation is an instinct of our nature, and is, therefore, a revelation of God. It is right for the aggrieved to protect himself for the reason that if he does not, two lives would be sacrificed, since the aggressor would likely be executed. Moreover, it would be better for the aggressor to lose his life than for the aggrieved to lose his.

2. These words do not forbid the infliction of capital punishment for murder. God said to Noah: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man." These words are of perpetual obligation for the reason that God spoke them to the second head of the human race. The reason that God gave shows that they are of perpetual obligation. That reason was that he made man in his image. This reason has as much force now as it did when it was

spoken. Our moral nature teaches us that a man who kills another through malice, or hatred, should be punished in proportion to his crime. So universal is the judgment of men that the murderer should be put to death that when justice is not meted out to him they can hardly be restrained from slaying him. The fact that the murderer was put to death under the Old Testament dispensation shows that capital punishment should be inflicted for murder.

3. These words do not forbid defensive war. When nations engage in war to enlarge their territory, or for some other selfish reason, they are responsible for all the blood that is shed. But when nations engage in war to protect the lives and property of their subjects they are not responsible in God's sight for the consequences of such a war. A nation has as much right to protect itself as an individual has to protect himself.

II. Some things these words forbid:

1. They forbid the killing that is done through hatred or malice, or to gratify feelings of revenge. When a man thus kills another he commits a great sin. He commits a great sin, first, for the reason that man was made in the image of God. We would do a great evil if we should defile the statue or picture of a great and good man. How much greater evil would we do if we should defile the image of God impressed upon the immortal soul of man?

Again, a man commits a great sin when he murders another, for the reason that men are brethren. They are of one blood. They have a common Father. Men commit a great sin when they, through hatred, kill an animal. But such a sin is nothing compared to the sin they commit when they thus kill a fellow-man—bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh. It is no wonder that God said to Cain, “Cursed art thou from the earth which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother’s blood from thy hands.”

Men commit a great sin when they murder a fellow-man, for the reason that they take from him that which is of very great value. Nothing except his soul is dearer to him than his life. When a man kills another he takes from him his property, his loved ones and friends, numerous opportunities of usefulness, the happiness of a lifetime and all opportunities of repentance if his sins have not been pardoned. To all appearances the number of murders has increased. One reason is because men have such a low sense of the heinousness of the crime. They are as ready to kill their fellow-man as they are to kill a dog. Another reason is because capital punishment is so seldom inflicted for murder. One of our legislators offered a resolution which would have put an end to capital punishment had it been adopted. Such a law would have contradicted the teachings of God’s Word. It would have increased the number of murders an hundred-

fold. Before men will cease to commit murder they must be made to realize that if they commit such a crime they will forfeit their lives. But men may commit murder gradually. The man who kills his fellow-man gradually is as guilty in God's sight as the man who kills him at once. The man who injures his fellow-man physically by placing heavy burdens upon him, gradually killing him, is a murderer. The man who oppresses the widow and orphan, bringing suffering upon their bodies and sorrow to their hearts, is as truly a murderer as the man who shoots down his fellow-man. Men who sell intoxicating drinks and morphine to their fellow-man, unless they sell such things for medicinal purposes, are murderers. The voice of their brother's blood cries to God from the earth, which has opened her mouth to receive it.

2. These words forbid lynching. As a general thing men who engage in lynching are the most godless men of the country. They do so during moments of excitement—without mature deliberation. Lynching is very seldom justifiable. There is no offense for which the law does not afford redress. Men should at least give the law a chance. Life is the gift of God, and the man who takes it, except at the command of God, commits murder, and should be punished. Officers of the law are the only ones whom God has appointed to execute justice, and

when any one else, except in self-defense, takes the life of his fellow-man, he is guilty of murder.

3. These words forbid duelling. He who kills another in a duel is as guilty of murder as the man who kills another through hatred or malice. No one has a right to kill another because he has insulted him. Such conduct is contrary to the teachings of God's Word. Moreover, when a man kills another in a duel he brings suffering upon innocent parties—the man's family. No one has a right to do this.

4. These words forbid self-murder. Not every one who commits suicide does so during moments of insanity. Not every one who commits suicide during moments of insanity is irresponsible to God for such an act. A man a few months since, after killing three of his children, killed himself. At the time of the killing he was under the influence of strong drink and opiates. Was he irresponsible to God for the killing of his children and himself? Men have no more right to kill themselves than they have to kill their fellow-man. Such men are guilty of double murder—murder both of body and soul—since they deprive themselves of every opportunity of repentance. Many men are killing themselves gradually. Men who are deliberately injuring themselves physically by open sin, or hard work, or over-eating, or exposure, are violating the teachings of these words. Men who indulge ex-

cessively in strong drink and worldly pleasures, and who in any other way injure their bodies, are acting contrary to the teachings of this commandment.

5. These words forbid any tendency on the part of men to encourage murder. If I encourage murder I am almost, if not altogether, as guilty in God's sight as the man who committed the deed. The murderer of Uriah was David, the man who encouraged the killing of Uriah. Lawyers who defend men whom they know are guilty of murder encourage the commission of murder, and are, therefore, murderers in God's sight. The governor who indiscriminately pardons murderers encourages the commission of the crime, and is, therefore, a murderer. So are jurymen who clear a man whom they know should hang, and judges who pronounce innocent men whom they know are guilty of murder.

6. These words forbid hatred and malice. The commandments reach the thoughts of men.—Math. 5: 22. John declares plainly that whosoever hates his brother is a murderer.

7. These words forbid soul murder. He who refuses to accept Christ as his Saviour is gradually destroying his soul. Such a man incurs greater guilt than the man who gradually kills his body. But there are men who are gradually murdering the souls of others as well as their own. The man who leads his fellow-man into sin is gradually destroying his soul. Our Saviour pronounced a woe

upon such a man. He declared it would be better for him if a millstone was bound around his neck and he was cast into the bottom of the sea.

8. These words forbid the killing of birds and animals unnecessarily. Men have a right to kill birds and animals for food and for self-protection ; but if they kill them for the pleasure that is thus afforded them they violate the teachings of these words. Members of shooting clubs are constantly bringing guilt upon their souls.

Thou shall not steal

—Exodus 20:15

THESE words teach us our duty to our fellow-man as regards his property. It is our duty to protect not only the life and chastity of our fellow-man, but his property. Theft is a great sin.

God's Word teaches us two principles that will enable us to determine what theft is. It teaches us that men commit theft when they take from their fellow-man that which belongs to him and when they withhold from him that which belongs to him. With these principles before us we may make the following assertions:

1. MEN steal when they directly appropriate the property of their fellow-man.

Any child knows that when a person takes the cow or horse of another he steals. But there are persons who, while they would not do this, nevertheless steal.

2. Men steal when they refuse to pay their debts.

Such men as truly steal as they would if they should rob a bank or steal a cow. They withhold from their neighbor that which belongs to him. If they put off paying their debts a needlessly long time they rob their neighbor of much he would have by

the use of his money. There are men who are not able to pay their debts. Inability to pay debts is not a proof of dishonesty. But let us not forget that an honest man will make an honest effort to pay his debts.

He will, in the first place, be industrious. A man who does not pay his debts because he is indolent is dishonest.

Again, if a man who is in debt is honest he will practice the strictest economy. He who has not the means to pay his debt because he is extravagant is dishonest.

3. MEN steal when they charge an illegal per cent. of interest for their money and place an illegitimate price upon their goods.

No one has a right to charge more than legal per cent. of interest for his money and more than market price for his goods.

When he does so he takes from his neighbor that which belongs to him. Men sometimes take advantage of the circumstances of their fellow-man. A man wishes money. If he does not get it he and his family will suffer. Some one knowing the great need of the man tells him that he will lend him money at 20 per cent. interest. The poor man sees that the per cent. of interest is too much, but there is nothing for him to do but to pay it. The man who lends him the money is a thief. He takes from the man that which belongs to him.

A man must have supplies for his family. Some one tells him that he will let him have supplies at such and such a price. He charges him two prices for them. He takes advantage of the circumstances of his neighbor. He is a thief. Men sometimes take advantage of the ignorance of their neighbor. A man has a piece of property that he thinks is worth \$100. It is worth \$1,000. Some one who knows the price of the property offers \$100. He takes what he is offered. The other man sells the property for \$1,000. He is a thief. There are thousands who are engaging in this kind of business. God pronounces a woe upon them.

There are two causes for this kind of theft. One cause is a great desire on the part of men to make a display. With some men the chief end of man is to get in society and shine there.

They are willing to sacrifice their characters to accomplish this purpose.

When the writer was in Birmingham a year since, he learned that there were people there who had placed a mortgage on their homes that they might live in a certain part of the city.

They wished to move in the highest circles and were willing to mortgage their homes in order to do so.

Another cause for this kind of theft is an inordinate desire on the part of men to get wealth.

They determined to get it at any cost. They concluded that if they could not get it honestly they would get it dishonestly. Such conduct on the part of men leads to embezzlement, train wrecking and bank robbery.

4. Men commit theft when they refuse to give the hireling an equivalent for his labor and when they withhold from him his wages beyond the time it is due. They oppress the hireling.

God pronounces a curse upon such men. They commit theft as truly as the man who steals his neighbor's cow.

5. Men steal when they give in their property at far less than its real value. Taxation is essential to the maintenance of the government. When men give in their property at far less than its real value they withhold from the government that which belongs to it. They have no more right to steal from the government than they have to steal from an individual.

6. Men commit theft when they refuse to purchase a half fare railway ticket for children above five years of age.

Railway companies have a rule to the effect that children above five years of age must pay half fare. When men refuse to buy this ticket or when they misrepresent the age of the child, they steal. They have no more right to rob a railway company than they have to rob an individual. Because railway

companies practice extortion on the people is no reason why they should deal dishonestly towards them.

7. Men steal when they use scales and measures that lie in their favor.

There are thousands who are using such scales and measures.

8. Men steal through misrepresentation and hypocrisy.

When a horse trader is very careful to mention the good traits of his horse but refuses to mention his bad traits he violates the teachings of this commandment. When a merchant misrepresents an article of merchandise he as truly steals as does the man who robs a bank.

A man represents himself as agent of a paper. After he has collected thousands of dollars, it is discovered that he is a fraud. A man claims to be a representative of an insurance company. He induces thousands to take insurance. After a time it is discovered that such a company does not exist. Where would you find a greater thief?

Men were appointed by the Governor of South Carolina to purchase whiskey for the dispensary. They were expected to purchase it at as low a price as possible. Whiskey houses told them that if they would purchase it from them they would sell it to them at a lower price than they would to other purchasers. They found out what the usual price was,

made the State pay that price and placed the balance of the money in their pockets. They are thieves and should be punished to the fullest extent of the law.

9. Men steal when they take advantage of the technicalities of law. Men need to remember that not everything is right morally that is right legally. There is a law that allows a bankrupt man a thousand dollars' worth of property. An honest man will not take advantage of that law. He will strip himself of everything that he has with a view of paying his debts. No honest man will turn over his property to his wife to get out of paying his debts.

10. Men steal intellectually as well as morally. The man who takes the intellectual goods of his fellow-man is as truly a thief as the man who takes his material goods.

Over the desk of every author and over the pulpit of every minister should be written the words, "Thou shall not steal."

11. Men steal morally. The man who lowers the moral tone of the community in which he lives is a thief. Offences will come, but woe unto the man by whom they come.

He who leads his fellow-man into sin by false reasoning or example is a thief. The saloon-keeper is a thief. Any man who places the bottle to the lips of his neighbor is a thief. Parents who fail to set their children a godly example and to

bring them up in the way they should go, rob them of that which is dear to them. Ministers who teach their pernicious doctrines and who fail to reprove sin are thieves, since they are withholding from the people that which belongs to them. They defraud them of happiness, character, and perhaps of their souls.

12. Men steal from themselves. The man who refuses to accept Christ as his Saviour is a thief. He defrauds himself of happiness, reputation, character and perhaps of heaven.

The professed Christian who does not live in accordance with his profession robs himself of everything that is of great value.

13. Men steal from God. We are God's property. Our time, our money, our talents, our strength belongs to Him. When we refuse to serve Him—to devote what we have to His service, we withhold from Him what belongs to Him.

“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse, for ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation.”

Slander

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.—*Ex. 20: 16.*

THIS commandment *teaches* us our duty to our fellow-man as regards his reputation. What is dearer to one than his reputation? Money is nothing compared to it.

1. "Men bear false witness against their neighbor in courts of justice.

"Men do not hesitate to bear false witness against their neighbor after taking upon themselves the most solemn vows. Some do it through hatred or envy. Some because they are bribed to do so. Others through friendly feelings for the person in whose behalf they perjure themselves. Such persons stop the course of justice. Many innocent persons have been condemned and many guilty persons have been acquitted because of false witnesses. False testimony in courts of justice lessen the value of and shake the confidence of people in judicial proceedings. Both secular and sacred history shows that false witnesses have in all ages been severely dealt with. In Athens the false witness was deprived of all of his civil rights. In Rome he was hurled from a high rock to his death. In Egypt his nose and ears were amputated. In India he was

taken to a certain place where, in the presence of a great multitude *of people*, his mouth was sewed up. Under the Old Testament dispensation he was brought before the judges and was treated as he thought in his heart to treat his neighbor.

2. "Men bear false witness against their neighbor in public addresses.

"Many politicians do not hesitate to slander their opponents. They, as a usual thing, do it behind their backs. Sometimes they do it in their presence. In many political speeches there is little argument. Many politicians seem to think the thing for them to do is to prejudice the people against their opponents by slandering them.

"Men make a mistake when they suppose that they can advance their interest by injuring the interest of others.

"A politician will gain more supporters by treating his opponent with fairness than by slandering him.

"Preachers sometimes bear false witness against their neighbor in their sermons. Ministers have been known to misquote the views of other ministers in doctrinal sermons. No minister can in this way build up his church. We should rejoice that religious controversy is a thing of the past.

"Sometimes authors bear false witness in their writings by misrepresenting the views of others.

"A lie written is worse than a lie spoken.

3. "Men bear false witness against their neighbor when they originate evil reports about him.

"A man who will deliberately originate an evil report about his fellow-man is a bad man. The Bible tells us that slander is a characteristic of the devil. It *tells us also* that the wicked and hypocrites are addicted to it, and that it is hateful and an abomination to God. We cannot afford to trust a man who will originate an evil report about his neighbor. There is an old saying that a dog that will bring a bone will carry one.

"A man who will bring an evil report to you about his neighbor will carry an evil report to his neighbor about you.

4. "Men bear false witness against their neighbor when they circulate evil reports about him.

"The Bible tells us that slander includes backbiting and repeating matters. It is almost as bad to circulate a bad report about a person as it is to originate such a report. There are people who know all of the scandal of the neighborhood. They seem to think that it is incumbent upon them to make it known. They do not realize that the injury that they thus do the reputation of their neighbor cannot be repaired. If they injure their neighbor's estate or his body they can to some extent repair such an injury, but they can never repair the injury that they do his reputation. An old woman once confessed to the priest that she had

slandered her neighbor. He gave her some seed and told *her* to return to him after she had scattered them. When she returned he commanded her to retrace her steps and gather the seed. She returned after a time and declared that the wind had wafted the seed away, and that it was impossible to gather them.

“He assured her that it was just as impossible for her to recall the evil reports she had circulated about her neighbor.

“Men cannot repair the injury that they do to their neighbor by slandering him.

5. “Men bear false witness against their neighbor when they exercise uncharitable judgment towards him.

“The Bible teaches us that slander includes evil surmising and uncharitable judgment. ‘I do not know that the report about Mr. Jones is correct,’ asserts one. ‘I believe, however, that he is capable of doing such a thing.’

“Men make a great mistake when they assert things about their neighbors that they do not know. We are very ignorant of the heart of our neighbor. We know little of his environments and of the temptations to which he is exposed. Perhaps if we should be placed under the same circumstances under which *he labors*, we would do as he has done.

“‘And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye and considerereth not the beam that

is in thine eye?" Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, 'Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?'

6. "Men bear false witness against their neighbor when they withhold part of the truth concerning him.

"In courts of justice men are not only required to tell the truth but the whole truth. They can by withholding part of the truth condemn an innocent man. Just so, when men fail to tell the whole truth about their neighbor they bear false witness against him.

7. "Men bear false witness against their neighbor when they speak of him in ambiguous terms with a view of misleading. Let us be plain in our conversation about our neighbor, otherwise we should not speak of him at all. We should not speak of him in such a way as that an impression will be made that will injure his reputation.

8. "Men bear false witness against their neighbor when they keep silent when he is slandered in their presence.

"If a man is being killed before my eyes and I make no effort to save him, I make myself partly responsible for the crime.

"Just so, when I keep silent while a fellow-man is being slandered in my presence, I become partly responsible for the slander.

“Every one *knows* that silence gives consent. Saul in not lifting his hands to protect Stephen, when he was being put to death gave his consent to his death and thus brought guilt upon his soul.

“WHY SHOULD WE NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS
AGAINST OUR NEIGHBOR?”

1. “Because in doing so we injure ourselves.

“We certainly injure ourselves morally in doing so. A bad habit is strengthened every time it is practiced. It is not hard to find men who have used profane language so often that they use it almost unconsciously. Some people have slandered their neighbor so often that they find it hard to speak well of him. Sin hardens the heart. It sears the conscience. Men injure themselves more, morally, by bearing false witness against their neighbor than they injure him in the matter of his reputation. There are other ways in which they injure themselves. They deprive themselves of much happiness and of the favor of their fellow-man.

2. “We should not bear false witness against our neighbor, because in doing so we injure him. It is not difficult to find men who, while they would not injure their *neighbor* physically, would not hesitate to *wink* down his reputation. Many are there who, while they would not take their neighbor’s pocketbook, take delight in stealing his repu-

tation. Slander has done men and women untold injury.

“It has broken many a heart. It has occasioned many a suicide. The Bible tells us that it separates friends, brings about discord among brethren, and leads to murder.

3. “We should not bear false witness against our neighbor because it is not Christlike to do so.

“We cannot conceive of our Saviour doing such a thing. He spoke well of sinners and publicans. The Scribes and Pharisees criticised and spoke unkindly of Zacheus, but our Saviour called him a son of Abraham. They wished to kill the adulterous woman, but our Saviour pardoned her sin and told her to go in peace and sin no more. Even his disciples criticised the woman who anointed his person, but He declared that wherever the gospel would be proclaimed that act of hers would be spoken of as a memorial of her.

“It is stated in one of the Apocryphal Gospels that once while a dog was being killed on the streets of Jerusalem *they who* were doing the killing, on seeing Jesus said, ‘Let us see what He will say of this dog.’ After looking at the dog for a few minutes, he said: ‘His teeth are like pearls.’ He certainly did not lose anything in thus speaking of the dog. Would anything have been gained by another foot-thrust? Nothing. We do not lose anything

when we speak well of men. And we certainly do not gain anything when we speak ill of them.

“We should not bear false witness against our neighbor because we are on our way to the judgment seat of Christ. The treatment we bestow upon our fellow-man here will be bestowed upon us there. If we exercise mercy towards him mercy will be exercised towards us. If we minister justice here justice will be ministered to us there.

“‘Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.’”

Regeneration

Verily, verily, I say unto you except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.—*John 3: 3.*

YOU cannot find on record a more important conversation than this one that was held between our Saviour and Nicodemus. He had doubtless seen Christ perform miracles that convinced him that he was from God. We do not know whether they convinced him that he was the Son of God or not. It seems, however, that he became a disciple of Christ before or after his crucifixion. We are told that he and Joseph embalmed the body of Jesus.

Nicodemus was a very important person, for the reason that he was a member of the Sanhedrim. He was doubtless a comparatively moral man. He, like other Pharisees, was self-righteous. The first words of our Saviour to him shook the foundation of his self-confidence. They also taught him the nature of His kingdom. He believed that Christ's kingdom was a temporal one. The words of our text teach us that it is a spiritual kingdom.

In discussing the doctrine of the new birth, I will consider, first, its nature ; secondly, its necessity ; thirdly, its evidence.

I. Its nature.

Our Saviour's words teach us that it is a spiritual birth. Verses 5, 6, 8. In other places of God's word we are told that His people were born of Him. The change is brought about by the operation of the Spirit on the heart. The influence thus exerted by the Spirit is irresistible. When the Spirit determines to change a man's heart he cannot resist His influence. He, in producing the change, uses the word as His instrument. He is the Agent. The word is the instrument. He brings about the change instantaneously. Regeneration is different from sanctification, in that while sanctification is progressive, regeneration is instantaneous. It is different from justification, in that while justification is outward, it is inward. The change does not change the substance of the soul. While a change is made in the faculties of the soul, they remain. The people of God think and reason as they always did.

Because the new birth is a spiritual one, it cannot be brought about by reformation or culture. Men may give up certain sins and thus make themselves better and they may improve their characters by means of education, but they cannot thus change their hearts. They cannot any more do this than they could cure heart disease, or consumption by an outward application. The source of life—the heart must be reached. If the heart is wrong the life will be wrong. If the heart is right the life

will be right. If you wanted a tree that produced bitter fruit to produce sweet fruit, you would not strip off its leaves, or break its limbs, or even cultivate it. You would put new life in it. Just so, that a wicked man may bring forth fruits of righteousness a new principle of life must be put into him by the Spirit.

2. The change cannot be wrought by the use of the means of grace. Men may by reading God's word make themselves better, but they cannot in this way produce this change. Nor can they bring it about by attending upon the services of God's house.

Attendance upon the services of the church may improve them intellectually and morally and God may use their attendance upon the services of the church as a means to regenerate their hearts, but this means of grace cannot bring about the change.

Prayer may improve their condition, but if the Spirit does not make the change it will never be wrought.

It is plain that there is no power in the word to regenerate the heart.

Here are two men. One is a comparatively moral man. His heart is easily touched. He is docile—ready to learn. The other is an exceedingly wicked man. The gospel has been long preached to him, but it has made no more effect upon him than rain makes upon a stone. One day, while

these two men were listening to the same sermon, while the moral and tender-hearted man is not moved, the wicked and hard-hearted man is convinced of sin and turns to God. Now, if there is power in the word to regenerate the heart it would have also regenerated the heart of the other man, for there was less resistance in his heart to overcome than in that of the wicked man. It does seem that the former would have been the first one to turn to God. The fact that only the wicked man did so is a proof that the Spirit brought about this change.

To illustrate again:

Here is a man who has been listening to the preached word for years. It has made no effect upon his heart. While attending upon the services of God's house, during a revival, he gives his heart to God.

Now, if there is force in the word to regenerate the heart, why did it not do this long before this? There was a time when it had less resistance to overcome than it had at the time of the change. If it did not change his heart when it was tender, how could it do so when it had become hard? Not only did the gospel story become less and less attractive to him, but the principle of ungodliness increased day by day. Here is a young man who takes hold of a sapling and tries to uproot it. He finds that he cannot do so. Years afterward, when he has become an old man and when the

tree has become the king of the forest, he goes back to it and tries to uproot it. What would you think of such a man? If he could not uproot the tree when it was a sapling and when he was in the vigor of manhood, how could he expect to do so after he has grown old and feeble, and after the tree has grown to maturity? If the word cannot regenerate a man's heart before it has lost any of its attractiveness for him, and when his heart is tender, how could it do so after its attractiveness has decreased and after his heart has become hardened in sin?

When we consider the condition of man's heart, we see that only the Spirit can change it. We are told that the carnal mind is enmity against God. It is as natural for man to sin as it is for water to run down hill. Nothing less than a miracle could have made the waters of Jordan stand upon a heap, or the sun to stand still. And nothing less than a miracle could change man's heart, for it is as natural for it to hate God as it is for water to run down hill, and as it is for the sun to proceed regularly from its rising to its setting. Hunger is natural to men. You could not persuade a man not to be hungry. You could induce him to curb his appetite, but he would still be hungry. Sin is just as natural to an unregenerated heart as hunger is to the physical man. What preacher then, however eloquent he may be, could persuade an ungodly man to give up sin?

The word of God teaches us that only the Spirit could change the heart. It tells us that regeneration is a new creation, a new birth, a resurrection from death, the giving of a fleshy heart in place of a stony heart. Ps. 51: 10; John 3: 5; Ep. 2: 1-4.

II. Let us consider in the next place the necessity of the change. The Saviour declares that unless a man is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. He means, first, by these words that except men are born again they cannot enjoy the privilege of the servants of God.

There are three kingdoms of God, the church, the kingdom of God in the heart, and the kingdom of God above. He means first, then, that unless man's heart is changed he cannot enjoy the privileges of the subjects of God's kingdom here. He may derive some intellectual pleasure from attending upon the services of God, but no spiritual pleasure will thus be afforded him. How can a man who has no appetite enjoy food? Ungodly men cannot enjoy things spiritual, for the reason that they have no appetite for such things. They may derive intellectual pleasure from reading God's word, but nothing more. How can a blind man enjoy beautiful pictures? The ungodly cannot see and enjoy the beauties of God's word for the reason that the eyes of their understanding are darkened. The singing of God's praises may afford them some kind of pleasure, but not the spiritual

delight that it affords God's servants. They can no more have this delight than a deaf man could enjoy music.

Our Saviour means in the second place by these words that men with unregenerated hearts could not enjoy the kingdom of heaven. This follows from what has already been said. If the ungodly tire of a short sermon, what would they do in heaven where there is constant talk about eternal things? If they become weary of singing God's praises here, what would they do in heaven where so much of it is done?

A noted infidel once said that if God's praises were sung constantly in heaven he did not care to go there. He told the truth. My unconverted friends, if God should allow you to enter heaven with unregenerated hearts, you would not be satisfied there. You could no more enjoy heaven with a sinful heart than a grub could enjoy the perfume of flowers.

As long as you are in your sin your understanding is depraved. Therefore, you have wrong views of God's character. You regard Him, not as a kind, heavenly Father, but as a judge and as one who takes delight in punishing His creatures. How could you be happy with Him as long as you have such views of His character? Your heart is depraved. You hate holiness. How could you be happy where there is nothing but holiness? You

hate God. How could you be happy with one whom you hate? On account of others, as well as on account of yourself, you could not with an unregenerated heart enter heaven.

God hates sin. If He refused to allow sinful creatures to touch the mount while he was giving the law, how could He permit them to enter heaven?

What would the angels say if you should ask them if they were willing for the ungodly to enter heaven? They would reply, "No, no; we were tempted once and many of our number fell. If temptation should again enter heaven there would be danger of our falling." If the redeemed should be asked the same question they would object as strongly as the angels. This change is essential to the enjoyment of heaven.

2. You could not serve God here without it.

However beautiful a watch may be on the outside, if its main-spring is out of order the watch could not run. Man's heart is his main-spring—the source of his life.

A city cannot be furnished with water if there is no source of supply. And man can have no strength to serve God unless there is a fountain of strength within him. You may serve God in a way with an unregenerated heart, but you could not serve Him sincerely. You may serve Him with an unregenerated heart as a slave but not as a son.

III. Notice in the next place the evidences of this change. While we cannot understand the mystery of this change, we can see its evidences.

Our Saviour intimated to Nicodemus that the change was mysterious. We cannot see the wind, cannot tell where it rises and where it stops, but we can see manifestations of its power. We can see limbs of a tree as they bend beneath its power. We cannot see the fluid upon a compass needle, but we can see manifestations of its power. We can see the needle as it points to the north. My friends, if there are no evidences of this change in your life you may know that you are in your sins.

If you are a servant of God it will be known.

Men do not light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that its light may be seen. If you are God's servants your light will shine.

Here are some evidences of a change of heart:

1. Hatred of sin.

If your heart has been changed you hate sin, not merely because of its consequences, but because of its heinousness, because God hates it. If your heart has been changed it is against your nature to sin. It is as truly against your nature to sin as it is against the nature of a wolf to eat grass, or of a dove to eat a carcass.

Men may break their limbs, but it is not their nature to do so. Just so, while a servant of God may sin it is against his nature to do so.

2. John tells us how we may know that we are God's servants. "Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit." Paul tells us how we may know that we have the Spirit. (Gal. 5: 22.) "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

(a) Have we love?

Do we love the Saviour?

Infidels admire the character of Christ, but they do not love Him. If you love Christ you love Him because He has saved you from your sins and because He has power to save others just as He saved you.

If you love Him you love His servants. "We know that we have passed from death into life because we love the brethren."

Once you delighted in the company of the ungodly. Now you find yourself longing for the company of the godly. Because you love them you do all that you can to help them and refrain from doing anything to injure them.

Since you love God you love His Word. Once you derived no pleasure from reading it. You hated it because of its threatening and requirements. But now you love it, not merely because of its promises, but because of its threatenings and requirements. You can say with the Psalmist, "Oh,

how I love thy Word, it is my meditation all the day."

Because you love God you love His house. You can say with the Psalmist, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."

(b) Have you joy?

The sinner is a stranger to it. But the servant of God rejoices at all times. He rejoices in times of sorrow, because he knows that all things work together for his good.

He rejoices when his property is taken from him, because he knows that God will supply him with things needful.

(c) Have you long-suffering?

You have if your heart has been changed.

However much others may injure you, you exercise long-suffering towards them. You forgive them because Christ has forgiven you. You realize that you have faults and that they who have injured you have some good qualities. You have also gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance.

She hath done what she could

—**Mk. 14:8**

THESE words were spoken by our Saviour concerning the noble deed that was performed by Mary in anointing His person. The true interpretation of the words is that she did her best. Jesus was qualified to pass this judgment on her conduct. He saw the motive that prompted her and He knew her resources. Jesus knows when we do our best. May we do our best during the coming year. May the pastor do his best in pastoral visitation, in preparing himself to preach the gospel and in being an example to the flock. May the people do their best in fighting against their spiritual foes, in their attendance upon the ordinances of the church, in giving to the spread of the gospel, in praying for their pastor and in co-operating with him in building up Zion.

Let us endeavor to find out what is our best in the light of the narrative before us:

I. Let me say that we should not measure our best by the best of others. Martha as truly did her best as Mary did hers. The reason why our Saviour expressed himself as He did about Mary's conduct was because it had been called into question. Had Martha's conduct been criticised He doubtless would have declared that she did *her* best.

Martha's talents were different from those of Mary. Mary had a devotional spirit. Martha was a woman of great activity. Martha as truly did *her* best along the line of *her* work as Mary did as regards the anointing of the Saviour's person. We all have not the same *kind* of talents. One is qualified to do *one* kind of work. Another is qualified to do *another* kind of work. We cannot expect a man who has *little* knowledge of medicine to render as efficient service to the sick as one who has taken a *thorough* course in medicine, or one who has *little* or no knowledge of law to plead as well before a jury as one who has been thoroughly educated in law, or for a member of the church to do as efficient work in God's vineyard as a minister who has received a thorough collegiate and theological education, or for an ungodly man to work as faithfully in the Lord's vineyard and to give as liberally to His cause as a man who has been led from darkness into light. We all have not the same *number* of talents. One has five talents, another two and another only one talent. The man of the parable who had two talents as truly did *his best* as the man who had five talents did *his best*. The same words that were spoken to the man of *five talents* were spoken to the man of *two talents*: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler of many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." The poor

widow who cast only two mites into the treasury as truly did her best as did any of the contributors, although many cast in far more than she did. Teachers in a country school may do as faithful work as those in a large and famous college. A little store on an obscure street may as truly do *its* best as a large cotton factory in a conspicuous part of the town do *its* best. Just so, we should not expect a man who has made little progress in the divine life, who is poor in this world's goods, and who has little experience in doing the work of the church, to be as consistent, to give as liberally and to do as efficient work as one who has lived very near to God, who is rich in things temporal and who has long worked in the Master's vineyard. While Mr. Moody was conducting a protracted service, he called for volunteers to visit the homes of the town in which he was holding the meeting, to distribute tracts and to urge sinners to take Christ as their Saviour. Among the many who came forward was an infirm old woman who had not long been a Christian. She wanted to do something for her Saviour. Perhaps some thought that there was little that she could do. But Mr. Moody was encouraged, as he noticed how willing and how anxious she was to do something for the Master. How faithfully did she work! God was doubtless as highly pleased with what she did as He was with what the great evangelist did, althought he was instrumental in leading

many from darkness into light. Some of us cannot do much towards leading others to Christ, but if we will do our best God will be as highly pleased with it as He will with what will be done by *any one*, however much that may be.

II. We should not measure our best of the future by our best of the past. A man who has been farming ten years should be a better farmer than he was when he began to farm. He should be a better farmer than he was a year ago. A physician who has been practicing five years should be more successful than he was when he began to practice. Professional men should year by year become more efficient in their respective callings. Just so, the man who gave his heart to God a year ago should be more consistent in his conduct, more liberal with his means and more efficient in the work that he does for the Master than he was then. Just so should it be with the church. She should not be satisfied with her past and present attainments. If there is no progress in her gifts, in her personal work for the Master and in the walk and conversation of her members she is not doing her best. There is danger of the church relaxing her efforts because of past attainments. What she should do is to let what she has done in the past encourage her to go forward and accomplish greater things. A woman who had been a nominal christian for years, and who did not realize that there was any work

that she could do for the Master was, during a protracted meeting, aroused to a deep sense of her duty and responsibility. She determined to do something for Christ. She decided that she would try to lift up the fallen women of the place. She talked to them as she met them on the streets. She rented a house and invited them to meet her there. In about a year she rescued about three hundred of these fallen ones and restored them to their parents. If we could realize as she did, that there is a great work to be done and go forward and do it, and never be satisfied with past attainments what would we not accomplish for God and our fellow-man? Have you done much in the past? Do more in the future. You have experience, and knowledge, and grace, and opportunity that you did not have a year ago.

III. We do our best when what we do is directed to a good end. Had Mary anointed her own person with the costly ointment, or used it to make fragrant her home she would not have done her best. Had Martha prepared a meal only for the members of her home, or had she not thrown open the doors of her home for Christ and His disciples she would not have done her best. We do our best when what we do is done for the honor and glory of Christ. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." If you throw your whole soul in singing a hymn that is wanting in sentiment, or if you make an eloquent address

that has a low subject you have not done your best. Just so, if what you do, you do only for yourself, or if you do it from a selfish motive, you certainly have not done your best. A shoemaker once said that making shoes was not his business—that serving God was his business—that he made shoes to pay expenses. He did his best. He realized that the chief end of man was to glorify God and enjoy him forever. The money that he made by making shoes he made subservient to serving God. How different is it with many people! Their main business is making money. Serving God is a subordinate matter. If anything is left after they have enjoyed the comforts and luxuries of life they give it to God, but very unwillingly. Only the fragments of their time and means they give to God. What they do is directed to a selfish end, or is done from a selfish motive. They serve not Christ but themselves. Their service needs to be cleansed, or placed upon a higher plane. A young man who had taken lessons in painting, after trying hard to paint a scene, became weary and fell asleep. His teacher, seeing him asleep and knowing that he had tried hard but in vain to paint the scene, with a few strokes of his brush gave the work that the young man had done the beauty that he had tried hard to portray. Just so, the blemishes and imperfections of the service that we often render need to be removed. The selfish motives that prompt us need to

be replaced by pure and unselfish motives. Here is a man who helps people from whom he expects to receive, or who have helped him, or people who are blessed with excellent mental and moral qualities, but he is slow to give a helping hand to poor people, or people who are not in a condition to help him, or to ignorant and immoral people. He gives liberally towards maintaining the ordinances of his *own* church, but he gives little or nothing to other causes. Now, however faithful or liberal he may be in the respects mentioned, he fails to do his best, because a selfish motive actuated him. He has served not Christ but himself. If we would serve our fellow-men, not simply for their own sake, but for the sake of Christ, then would our service be rendered in the right spirit—then would it be directed to the right end. “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me.”

IV. We do our best when what we do touches all of our surroundings. The fragrance of the ointment used by Mary upon the person of Christ penetrated every corner of the house. There was not a person in the house but who was cheered by it. Even Mary herself derived a benefit from it. If we do our best people far and near will be benefitted by it. The housekeeper who discharges faithfully her household duties benefits every member of her home. The boy who applies himself

closely to his studies exerts an influence for good over every one in the school. The mill hand, who does faithfully his work, makes an impression on every hand and manager in the mill. A church member who faithfully exerts himself to glorify Christ is not as a candle placed under a bushel, but he is as a candle placed on a candlestick, and that gives light to all that are in the house. A church that is doing its best benefits not only those of its own neighborhood and country, but it benefits thousands of other neighborhoods and countries. If we are not sending blessings to the heathen and others at a distance who are needing our help we are not doing our best.

V. We do our best when what we do is done through love for the Saviour. It was great love for the Saviour that influenced Mary to anoint His person with such costly ointment. It is well for us to serve God through gratitude, or from sense of duty, but it is better for us to serve Him because we love Him. When we do this His yoke will be easy and His burden will be light to us. We will then be willing to make sacrifices and bear hardships for his sake. It is not hard for a mother to sit at the bedside of a loved one upon whom the hand of sickness has been placed. What she does for him she does cheerfully. In the same way do people who love the Saviour serve Him.

A missionary and his wife, after laboring for many years in India, decided to return to this country that their children might be educated. They had not been here long before they received a letter from the people among whom they had been laboring, urging them to return to them. They longed to return to them, but well did they know that their children could not be educated there. So they decided to leave their children in this country, fully realizing that they might never see them again. On the day of their departure their hearts were sad, but for the sake of their children they kept back their tears. The mother said as she turned away from them, "It is for thy sake, dear Saviour, that I make this sacrifice." What would not a true christian do for Christ's sake? If we love Him, we will gladly, for His sake, make any sacrifice, bear any hardship and fight against any sin. Few victories would soldiers achieve if they should fight simply from sense of duty, but there is no telling how many victories they would achieve if they should be actuated by love for their general and their country. Just so, our gifts to our Saviour, our zeal in His vineyard and our victories over our spiritual foes will be in proportion to our love for Him. A physician may attain success in his profession without loving his patients; a lawyer may succeed and not love his clients; a merchant may carry on a successful business and not love his cus-

tomers, but that men may do successful work for God they must love Him.

VI. God will make better our best. The Saviour made better Mary's best. He declared that whenever the gospel would be preached this act of hers would be spoken of as a memorial of her. Kingdoms have risen and fallen, kings and princes have lived and passed away, but this act of Mary will live as long as the eternal ages. Thousands have by reading this narrative and hearing it preached from, been influenced to give more liberally to God and to work more faithfully in His vineyard. Just so, the kind words that we speak and the kind deeds that we perform will be living long after we have passed into eternity. They will produce a wave of influence that will continue to spread until it strikes against the shore of eternity. God will make better our best. The few loaves and fishes that the lad placed into Jesus' hands would not have multiplied had he used them to supply his own wants, but because they were blessed by the Saviour, they fed multitudes. If the blessing of Jesus rests upon what we give or do, it will bring forth an hundred-fold. There is a legend to the effect that when certain people heard that their king was returning home they made preparation for his coming. They beautified their houses and the streets of their little town. On the day of his return they laid down to rest. When they awoke they found that their

king had come and that he had transformed their humble homes into palaces and the streets of their town into streets of gold. This is only a legend, but it illustrates the thought that God will make better our best. If you should lead some one to Christ you will find in eternity that because you did so the souls of thousands were saved. If you give a few cents towards giving the gospel to the heathen, in five years the few cents will have increased more than one hundred-fold. If you speak a comforting word to an afflicted soul you will doubtless discover in eternity that that word was a means of comfort to thousand of other souls. God will make better your best.

VII. Our best will be criticised. Mary's best was criticised. Judas and the other Apostles declared that the ointment should have been sold and its proceeds given to the poor. Just so, even after we have done our best it will be criticised. After a member of the church has done all that he can to live near to God, some one will say that he should have done more. After he has given all that he can to God's cause and worked faithfully in His vineyard some one will declare that he has come far short of discharging his duty. After elders and deacons have been faithful in the discharge of their responsible duties, some one will say that they should not be officers in the church of God.

And after a minister has thoroughly prepared himself to preach and faithfully visited his people, some one will say that he should have done more.

But should we relax our efforts because of unkind criticism?

Criticism should influence us to be more faithful in our efforts to serve God.

For ye know the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.—II Cor. 8:9

PAUL in this chapter urges the Corinthians to give to the poor saints at Jerusalem. He reminds them of the liberality of the Macedonian church—that they had given to these poor saints beyond their means. The main reason that he gives why they should give to the poor is because of the condescension of Christ. This is the reason why we should give to all benevolent causes. The man who after contemplating the condescension of Christ will not give to benevolent objects has a hard heart. Gratitude to Christ for His obedience to the law and His death upon the cross is the motive that should actuate us in all of our service to Him.

The text naturally divides itself. It teaches us first, that Jesus was originally rich; secondly, that He became poor; thirdly, that His purpose in becoming poor was that His people might be rich.

I. Jesus was originally rich.

1. He was rich in divine attributes. The attributes of God the Father were His. “Being in the

form of God He thought it not robbery to be equal with God." He was the brightness of His Father's glory and the express image of His person. "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God." All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made."

He was rich in power. There was nothing too hard for Him to do. He set up the pillars of the earth. By the word of His mouth innumerable worlds were brought into existence. He said, "Let there be light, and there was light." There was nothing in heaven or on earth that He did not create. He was rich in wisdom. It was His wisdom that enabled Him to contrive the plan of redemption, and to so arrange the solar system as that there would be no confusion. He is so wise that He has never made a mistake. Many men of great power and wisdom can be found. But where is the man who is as wise and powerful as was the Son of God before He left His throne on high? He was infinite not only in power and wisdom, but also in justice, goodness and truth. He was rich also in possessions. There was nothing that He did not own. The earth and the fulness thereof were His. The cattle upon a thousand hills were His. The gold, the silver, and all the pearls and diamonds of the earth were His. He could point to the beasts of the fields, to the fowls of the air and to all intelligent

beings, both on earth and in heaven, and say all these are mine. In whatever direction He looked He could see nothing except His own.

He was rich also in honors.

However rich a man is, if he is in shame and disgrace he is poor indeed. No one has ever been honored as was our Saviour. Upon all space was written the inscription, "Glory be unto God." Moment after moment incense of praise went up to His throne, not only from the inhabitants of the earth, but from the bright spirits that stood before His throne. The angels followed Him to this world and exclaimed, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will to men."

He was rich also in love.

However rich in this world's goods a man may be, if he is not loved he is the poorest of the poor. I would rather be a pauper and be loved than a rich man and be without love. Our Saviour was not loved by the inhabitants of this world. He was not loved even by His own people. He came unto His own, but they received Him not. But He was loved by His Father and the angels. He was His Father's constant delight. He showed His love for Him by supporting Him in the Wilderness, in the Garden of Gethsemane, on the cross and by crowning His labors with success. As to the angels, it was only necessary

for Him to speak in order to secure their obedience, so great was their love for Him.

II. He became poor.

His possessions He exchanged for dire poverty. His honors He exchanged for ignominy and shame. His power He in a sense laid aside. He exhibited it in behalf of others, but seldom in His own behalf. When He was being tempted by the devil He could have slain him with one blow of His hand. When He was assailed by His enemies, what prevented Him from destroying them? And when He was defied by them to come down from the cross, what prevented Him from doing so? He refrained from exhibiting His power in His behalf for your sake and mine. Whether you consider the birth, the life, or the death of the Saviour, you can readily see that He was the poorest of the poor. He was born not in Cæser's palace, but in a stable where the ox fed. His bed was not in a cradle of gold, but in a manger. His clothing was not that of the children of kings, but that of the children of the poverty stricken. While His parents were good and respectable people, they were very poor. He was taken to Egypt by His parents and was there a stranger in a strange land. When He became old enough to labor He labored at His father's trade—making His bread by the sweat of His brow. When He became a man He was poor, His clothing was woven from the top to the bottom. He rode not in

a chariot as He went about doing good, but walked. He was dependent upon those to whom He ministered for His daily bread. When He saw the fox hurrying to his den and the birds flying to their nests, He declared that the foxes had holes and the birds of the air had nests, but the Son of Man had not where to lay His head. See Him in the wilderness as He hungers and thirsts. He who made all things hungers for bread. He who opened the fountains of the deep, thirsts for water. See Him in the Garden of Gethsemane. His disciples would not watch with Him an hour. He was alone, yet not alone. He was poor in earthly friendship, but not in the friendship of His Father and that of angels. When He was assailed by His enemies His disciples forsook Him and fled. Even Peter followed Him afar off. Poor, indeed, was He then in the friendship of the world. But see how poor He was a moment before His execution and as He hung upon the cross. So poor was He that a crown of thorns was placed upon His brow, so poor that He was stripped of His clothing and exposed to the sun. So poor was He as He hung upon the cross that when He cried for water they gave Him vinegar to drink.

III. The reason why He became poor—that we might become rich.

1. Jesus by becoming poor made us rich in possessions. All that belong to Christ are the chris-

tians. There is not a piece of gold or silver that is not his. "For all things are yours; whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" You may not be rich in the sense the rich man is, but you are rich and your riches exceed his in value. While his riches are like a muddy pool, yours are like the gentle flowing stream. Your granaries may not be full to overflowing, but you have all that you need. Though the children of Israel received manna only as they needed it they were infinitely better off than the Egyptians whose granaries were full to overflowing. No Christian should fear that his wants will not be supplied. God has declared that He will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly.

2. Jesus in becoming poor made the christian rich in things spiritual. Spiritual wealth is far preferable to secular wealth. While secular wealth is transient, spiritual wealth is permanent. While only a few can have secular wealth, all who desire spiritual wealth may have it. While spiritual wealth is essential to happiness, secular wealth is not. However much secular wealth the ungodly may have, he is ignorant of true happiness. However poor the servant of God may be in this world's

goods, he is happy since he has the peace that this world cannot give, neither take away. The source of his happiness is not that which is without, but that which is within.

3. Christ by becoming poor made the servant of God rich in promises. Whether a man has any money about his person or not, if he has in his pocket numerous checks signed by wealthy and honest men, he is rich. The moment these checks are presented at the bank they are honored. The promises of God are so many checks upon the bank of heaven. God has never yet failed to honor them. Are you in need of things temporal? Present to the bank of heaven the promise, "Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land and verily thou shalt be fed." Are you in trouble? Present to the bank of heaven the promise, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

4. Jesus by becoming poor made the Christian rich in eternal things. You are not now in the enjoyment of these things but you will be. They are as truly yours now as they will be when you shall stand in the presence of God. Some one says to you, "Yonder broad acres and yonder magnificent palace are mine. Moreover, millions of dollars are in the bank to my credit. While I do not now enjoy these things, they are mine." Just so, may the servant of God reason as regards eternal things. While he

is not in enjoyment of them he has a title to them that nothing on earth, or in heaven, or in hell can take from him. Servant of God, you are rich in yonder pearly gates, golden streets, and crystal fountains. Lazarus, while lying at the gate of Dives was infinitely richer than he was. It was not long before Lazarus and Dives fully realized this.

Since the Son of God by becoming so poor has made you rich in all of these things you should be so grateful to Him as to be willing to give not only to the poor, but to both Home and Foreign Missions.

“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.”

But I have called you friends

—John 15:15

IF THERE were no affection and sympathy between men, this world would be a hell. Few things should we value more highly than the friendship of our fellow-men. I am sorry for a man who is without health, means and knowledge, but I am far more sorry for the man who is without friends. However poor a man may be in this world's goods, however feeble he may be in health, and however ignorant he may be, if he has friends, he is a fortunate man. But on the other hand, however, rich he may be, however strong physically he may be, and however learned he may be, if he has no friends, he is of all men the most miserable. If you have true friends, appreciate them.

Not every man who professes to be your friend, is your friend. You make a great mistake if you for a moment think so. There are many people who show a disposition to help you when you need no help, but when you really need help they put you off with cheap sympathy. When the sky is clear and the sun is shining, they are very profuse in their professions of friendship for you; but when the sky is overcast with clouds, when adversity comes, they forsake you. They are friends, but

they are false friends. Still every person has some true friends.

As wicked a man as Herod the Tetrarch was, he had one true friend. When the emperor banished him to France, he conveyed his estate to Herodias to whom he had been wedded unlawfully. She refused to receive it. She said to the emperor, "Sir, my love for my husband will not permit me to accept your bounty. I lived with him in prosperity and I will not desert him in adversity." Though she was a wicked woman, she was a true friend of Herod's; though she was unfaithful to her first husband, she was faithful to her second. Many of us—perhaps all of us—have friends who would be faithful to us under whatever circumstances we may be placed. Men have given up their time, their money, their rank, and even their lives for their friends. When General Byrd, of Virginia, was about to be killed by Indians, a chief, who had been a friend of his, threw himself on him and said, "Before you kill him, you must kill me." He was willing to give up his life for his friend. This reminds me of the friend who sticketh closer than a brother, the one of whom our text speaks, Jesus, the Son of God. He not only gave up His throne and bore hardships and endured persecution for us but He died for us. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend. Ye are My friends if ye do the things I command you."

Our Saviour also shows His friendship for us by interceding for us. How many blessings come to us through the intercession of Jesus! Never yet has His intercession for His people failed. Dr. Chapman tells of a young man who, when the Civil War broke out, went to the front as a private. When a companion of his boyhood days, Robert Lincoln, heard of it, he sent him word that if he wished a better position, he would intercede with his father, the President, for him. He did not accept his offer, but said afterwards that often when he was worn out he said to himself, "If the hardships become unbearable, I will get my old companion to intercede with his father for me. I would rather have him to intercede for me than the cabinet, for he is the President's son." No intercession with the father will avail as does the intercession of Jesus, for He is His Son. Our petitions are feeble, but if He presents them to the Father they will be answered.

Jesus shows His friendship for His people by giving them free access to Him. He is never too busy to attend to the wants of His people. Any one who sincerely wishes to see Him will be admitted into His presence. He has never yet turned a sincere soul from Him, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." "Whosoever cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." "The spirit and the bride say come; let him that heareth

say come, let him that is a Christian come; whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely."

However busy you may be, you would hardly refuse to see a friend of yours. A minister said that he once went in company with a friend of his to see a governor. The watchman sent their cards to the governor but he said he was too busy to see them then. While they were waiting a man who was a special friend of the governor passed by and said to the watchman, "I wish to see the governor, I will not keep him long." The governor had told the watchman to let him come and go as he wished. So does Jesus deal with his friends. The way into His heart is always opened for them. He, by his obedience and death, has broken down the middle wall of partition. He has opened up for them a new and living way into the holy of holies. So that they may boldly approach the throne of grace where they may obtain mercy and find grace to help them in time of need. To them he cries, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of Me for I am meek and lowly of heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

Jesus shows his friendship for His people by looking on the bright side of their character and conduct. While He does not countenance sin in any one, He bears patiently with the short-comings of men. "He knows our frame, He remembers that

we are dust." "Like as a father pitith his children, so the Lord pitith them that fear Him." If any one should scandalize a friend of yours in your presence, you would protect him. You would say to him, "what you say cannot be true. I know him and I think he is incapable of such a thing. There must be some explanation. I at least will not believe what you say until I have the facts." You are disposed to think well of your friend though he is slandered. Though Satan slanders Christ's servants, though they are weak spiritually, he sympathizes with them.

He shows His friendship for His people by entering into fellowship with their joys and sorrows.

When joy comes into your life you want your friends to know about it. When your heart is burdened with sorrow you tell them about it, not only because you wish their sympathy but because you know that they would be grieved if you did not do so. Jesus rejoices with you when you are happy and sympathizes with you when you are sorrowful. His message to His disciples through the angel was, "Go tell my disciples and Peter." He remembered how Peter wept after he denied Him. He knew that a burden of sorrow was still in Peter's heart. He wanted to remove it by sending him good news.

He shows His friendship for His people by revealing to them the secrets of His heart. You have

friends to whom you unbosom yourself. You tell them what you would not tell others.

Jesus deals thus with His friends. "For all things that I have heard from my Father I have made known unto you." "The secret of the Lord," says the Psalmist, "is with them that fear Him." To John, Jesus said, "Him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna and I will give him a white stone and in the stone a new name which no man knoweth saving him that receiveth it." Our Saviour reveals Himself to His people as He does not to the world. He gives to them peace and joy and wisdom that the ungodly are ignorant of. The man who wills to do His will shall know of the doctrine whether it is of God or not.

He proves His friendship for His people by being constant to them. Oh! the constancy of the love that Jesus has for His people. It has been compared to the love that a mother has for her children. But it is nothing compared to it. "Can a mother forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion upon the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet I will not forget thee." Jesus will never leave His friends. He will not forsake you because you are sick or poor, or weak spiritually.

II. How may we show our friendship for Jesus?

1. By loving Him. If you do not admire the disposition, the principles, or the character of a

man, you cannot claim to be his friend. If you do not love Jesus you are not His friend. Many who profess to love Him do not. They love something that pertains to this world better. John McNeil says Jesus must dwell not only in the throne-room, but on the throne.

If you love the wine cup, or your ease, or your money, or your finery, or even your loved ones better than you do Jesus you are not His friend.

If we are the friends of Jesus we delight in His company. We are in the company of Jesus when we go to His house. Do we delight in going there? Also when we pray to Him. Do we delight in doing so? Also when we read His Word. Do we delight in doing so?

2. We show our friendship for Jesus when we obey His commandments. "Ye are My friends if you do whatsoever I command you."

"He that hath my commandments and keepeth them he it is that loveth Me."

"If any man love Me he will keep My sayings." "He that saith I know Him and keepeth not His Commandments is a liar and the truth is not in him."

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

—Ph. 4:8

THE Apostle in the words of our text, sums up what he had previously said to the Phillipians. In the first part of the chapter he tells them to “stand fast in the Lord, to be of the same mind in the Lord, to help the women who had labored with him in the gospel, to rejoice in the Lord always, to let their forbearance be known unto all men, to be anxious in nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let their requests be made known unto the Lord.” Then follow the words of our text.

He tells us some things that we should think about. Thoughts are the index of character. “For as he thinketh in his heart so is he.”—Prov. 23:7. A man’s thoughts betray him. He whose thoughts are upon the things of the world makes little effort to please God. The man who exercises an unfor-

giving spirit towards his fellow-man would do little to benefit mankind. Such a person is malicious, and malicious people are far from being what they ought to be. Thoughts also react upon character. People who make no effort to control their thoughts have little strength of character. They become worse and worse. We are, for this reason, told to keep the heart.

1. The Apostle tells us first to think on things that are true. Spiritual and eternal things are true things. The opposite of these things are false things. People who think about spiritual and eternal things are true people. You may safely trust them. But you do a risky thing to trust people who think about earthly and sinful things. Quite a prominent man, after being elected to the French Senate, engaged some rooms in Paris, and paid three months' rent in advance. The proprietor who was an atheist asked him if he wanted a receipt. "No," he answered, "God witnessed the payment."

"Do you believe in God?" asked the atheist.

"Yes," he replied. "Don't you?"

"No," answered the atheist.

"Then you will please give me a receipt," said the great man.

He was right. It was not right to trust a man who did not believe in God. Any one who does so makes a mistake. I will tell you, whom you may safely trust—people whose minds are constantly on

divine things. You will find by reading history, that the truthful people of all ages were those who thought often of true things.

2. The apostle tells us to think of honest things. The word honest means in the original language, honorable or reverent. Think then of things that are worthy of admiration, or reverent things. People who are irreverent in thought will be irreverent in word and action. John Green, the author of the "History of the English People," had once the privilege of spending an evening with Gladstone. He afterwards said: "I am proud of our leader. He is a man of so noble a soul." That was a great deal to say of any one. Gladstone's conversation showed that his thoughts dwelt on noble things. It is only necessary to talk to men to see what kind of souls they have. Their conversation betrays their thoughts, and their thoughts are an index to their character. Irreverent language is born of irreverent thinking. Noble prose and poetry are the result of noble thinking. If you wish your life to be a noble life, think of noble things.

3. The apostle tells us in the next place to think of just things. We should have just thoughts of God. Many of us have unjust thoughts of Him. When He lays the hand of sickness upon us or takes our loved ones or our property from us, we declare that He has done us an injustice. God has never treated any one unjustly. He is incapable of

doing such a thing. Job had unjust thoughts of God once, but he saw his mistake. Jacob was disposed to think unjustly of God because he said, "All these things are against me." We sometimes show the same spirit. We should also have just thoughts of our fellow-men. Most of the trouble in this world is brought about by men and women thinking unjustly of each other. Ofttimes when you are thinking that some one is thinking unkindly of you he is thinking well of you. Let us not be sensitive. If we do our duty we need not be afraid of the thoughts men have of us. But oftentimes we have unjust thoughts of people, because we do not know the circumstances that control their actions. A manufacturer found it necessary to reduce the wages of his employees 10 per cent. A committee appointed by the labor union waited on him.

They demanded that the 10 per cent. be restored. He said to them: "That is all right, gentlemen. You have just as much right to demand an increase in your wages as my stockholders have to demand an increase in their dividends. They invest their money, you invest your labor. Select your experts and bring them to my office. We will give them permission to examine our books. If they decide that the 10 per cent. in your wages should be restored, we will gladly do so, though we may lose by so doing." They selected their experts, and the books were examined with this result: At the end of three weeks

a committee went to the manufacturer and said, "We not only do not ask that the 10 per cent. in our wages be restored, but we ask for a further reduction." They had unjust thoughts of the manufacturer, because they did not know the motive that prompted him to make the reduction. Before we feel unkindly towards any one let us be sure that we know the motive that actuated him in his conduct towards us.

4. The Apostle tells us to have pure thoughts. "Whatsoever things are pure." If you are impure in thought you will be impure in word and act. Meyer says, "Impure thoughts lay down the train lines upon which the power of actions will presently proceed, and thoughts set up the electric wires along which the messages will flash." Guard your thoughts, my brother. They lead to action. An English officer caught a young tiger, and brought it up as a pet. One day, while the officer was asleep, the tiger began to lap his hand. When the officer awoke, he found that the rough edges of the tiger's tongue had torn his flesh, and that it was licking his blood. He reached for his revolver at once, and shot it through the brain, for he knew that he would never again be safe. Impure thoughts are like that tiger. No man who cherishes such thoughts is safe. He will sooner or later be impure in word and action.

5. The Apostle tell us again to think of lovely things. It is strange that when there are so many

lovely things to think about, we persist in thinking of unlovely things. Henry Van Dyke says, "Think often of your friends, seldom of your enemies, and every day of Christ. Be governed by your admirations rather than by your disgusts." Why think of earthly things when you may think of heavenly things? Why think of sinful pleasures, rather than the pleasures that the religion of Christ affords; of your enemies, rather than of your friends; of your troubles rather than of your blessings? William Blake, a great painter, seemed to look on the bright side of everything. His mind was constantly full of beautiful thoughts. When a little girl was brought to him one day he placed his hands upon her head and said, "Little daughter, I pray that you will see as much beauty in the world as I have seen." When a friend of his died, he said, "I thought I would be taken first. I regard death nothing more than going from one room to another." On the day of his death he composed and sang hymns that were so beautiful that his wife, as she stood by, was enraptured by them. He said to his wife: "They are not mine. They are not mine." With such faith he died. He saw the beautiful in everything. Even death was to him beautiful.

6. The Apostle tells us to think on things that are of good report. By these things he means things that are spoken well of—that men agree in commending. Ten of the men who were sent to

spy out the land of Canaan brought back a false report. Only two brought back a good report. The ten looked on the dark side of things. They looked at the giants more than at the beautiful gardens, fertile lands and luscious fruits. In other words, they looked at matters from a human rather than a divine standpoint. Joshua and Caleb looked at the giants, but they looked at them through eyes that looked at the promises of God. They believed that while the giants were powerful, God was all powerful. They thought of things that were of good report. Would that we could at all times think of these things. What is too hard for our God to do? Are His arms shortened so that He cannot help, and is His ear heavy so that He cannot hear? Ofttimes we hesitate to undertake a work for God because of our unbelief. For the same reason we are constantly fearing that He will not give us things needful, and that when trouble comes, He will not sustain us. For a like reason we often fear that the work He has begun in our hearts will not be carried to completion. Let us think of things that are of good report.

Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we are incorruptible.

—I Cor. 9:25

PAUL had in mind the Olympic games—something that he was familiar with. He doubtless had witnessed them and taken a part in them. He writes to those who doubtless had witnessed them. He compares the life of a christian to a race. He compares it to a fight. II Tim. 4: 7—"I have fought the good fight." We have a contrast here between the conduct of the men of the world and that of the christian.

I. The folly of the aim of the world. They do it to obtain a corruptible crown. Their aim was to obtain a corruptible crown—a garland of laurel or olive. This, of course, was not all they received; it was a symbol of the honors that they received.

The victorious athlete was highly honored. Poets sang his praises, sculptors were employed by the government to carve his statue and sacrifices were offered to him. While he was riding in his chariot to his native city, flowers and gifts were showered in his path and a breach was made in the wall of the city that he might enter. The road that was usually traveled was not regarded good enough for him. But where are all the honors that he

received—the crown that was placed upon his brow, the statues that were carved, the altars that were erected? All are gone. So it is with all earthly things. Honors are here to-day, gone to-morrow. Wealth takes wings and flies away; pleasures are as the bubbles upon the waves of the ocean. Many a man seated upon the pinnacle of fame to-day will sink into obscurity to-morrow; many who are in possession of vast wealth to-day will be beggars to-morrow; many who are enjoying earthly pleasures to-day will be miserable to-morrow. “They do it to obtain a corruptible crown.” One of Bunyan’s characters is represented as using a muck rake while he is gathering together the dust and filth of the street. Above him hangs a crown, but he takes no notice of it. Many people are so busy working for wealth and honors and enjoying pleasures that they have no thought of the crown that is laid up for God’s servants. Such things are transient. Not only so, but afford little satisfaction. The more wealth and honors men get the more they wish. It is said that after Alexander conquered the world he wept because there was no more to conquer. Such things injure men; they injure the soul; may be a hindrance to the salvation of the soul.

II. The wisdom of the christian in his aim. “Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.” We find several references to this crown in the Word of God.

Paul calls it a crown of righteousness. II Tim. 4: 2—It is a crown of righteousness in that only the righteous can wear it. Crowns are worn by the wicked in this world. Many a king upon whose brow sits a crown is the vilest of the vile, but nothing that defileth or worketh abomination can enter the presence of God. Many a servant of God is troubled with disagreeable neighbors, but there is no disagreeable person up yonder; no discord or strife is there. It is a crown of righteousness in that it consists of righteousness. What the christian is working for is not happiness merely, but PURITY, HOLINESS. Comforting is the thought that heaven is a place of sinlessness. SIN IS THE SOURCE OF OUR SORROW, suffering and disappointments. But there is no sin in God's presence.

James calls this crown a crown of life. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life." It is a crown of life in that it is an eternal crown. It will not grow old; it will not perish. Everything in this world shall perish; the most magnificent structures, your homes and your bodies will crumble into dust, but the crown God promises to those who love Him will endure forever. It is an incorruptible crown you have; an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

Paul, in his epistle to the Ephesians, terms it a crown of glory. He tells them that if they are

faithful when the Chief Shepherd shall appear
He will give them a crown of glory.

This crown is a symbol of honor and dignity. The athletes were highly honored, the men of the world are highly honored; but such honors are nothing compared to the honors of the redeemed. Christ tells us that if we overcome He will make us to sit down on His throne even as He overcame and sat down on His Father's throne. "Come thou who hast been faithful over a few things and I will make thee ruler over many things."

This crown is a symbol of the joy of the redeemed. The joy of the redeemed is the joy of Christ. "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." The Christian has joy, but it is only a foretaste of the joy of the heaven. "In God's presence is fulness of joy." There is nothing to mar the joy of the redeemed. It is a joy that cannot be expressed—unspeakable.

This crown is a symbol of beauty. Christ's prayer before He was crucified was that His disciples might be with Him that they might see His glory. Peter, James and John saw something of this glory on the Mount. We are told that His face shone as the sun and His garments as the light. Peter was so well pleased that he did not wish to leave the sacred place. He asked that he might make three tabernacles—one for Christ, one for Elijah and one for Moses. The crown of the re-

deemed is one that glistens. It shall shine as the brightness of the firmament and as the stars forever and ever.

III. Notice in the next place the wisdom of the world in the pursuit of their aim. The athletes represents the world. What did they do? They, in the first place, DENIED THEMSELVES. Paul says they were temperate in all things. They were temperate in eating and drinking. They ate nothing and drank nothing that injured them physically. They underwent severe discipline and attended the exercises of the gymnasiums. They endured hardships and suffering before they entered the race. They had only one aim and that was to obtain the crown. They ran the race with all their might; they knew that no slothful person could win the prize. They stripped themselves of every encumbrance; they ran with patience and perseverance the race. All the men of the world are striving to accumulate wealth and to attain honor. They deny themselves and endure hardships—even jeopardize their lives. Their aim is single; they throw all of their energy into the race for worldly things; they allow nothing to prevent their securing them. They are wise in the pursuit of their aim.

But how is it with many Christians in the pursuit of their aim?

IV. We see the folly of many professed Christians in the pursuit of their aim.

How little do they deny themselves! If the athlete had denied himself as little as some christians deny themselves he would soon have lost his breath in running the race. There would have been no chance for him to win the prize. He knew it. Many a professed christian seems to forget the most important condition of his salvation—self-denial. “If any man will come after Me let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.”

Many a professed christian is not single in heart and purpose. The athlete allowed nothing to take his eyes off of the prize that was in the hand of the judge. Along the course was beautiful natural scenery. Beautiful statues were on both sides of the course, but these things were to him as though they did not exist; so determined was he to get the crown. Is the christian as bent in securing the crown of righteousness? Is he concentrating all of his thought and energy in the one great end of life—the one thing needful? Concentration of thought and energy is essential to success in everything. That a farmer may succeed he must be concerned mainly about the cultivation of his farm. That merchants may succeed their hearts must be set on their business. Noah succeeded in building the Ark because his heart was set on his work. Abraham lived a life of a pilgrim because his heart was set on the “city that hath foundation whose builder and maker is God.”

How little effort is put forth by many professed christians in running the race that is set before them! How slothful they are! The athlete knew that no slothful person could win in the race—that in order that he might secure the crown he had to run with all of his might. And yet how slowly many professed christians are running the race set before them! How cold and indifferent and luke-warm they are! They will not win in the race if there is not a great deal of improvement in their conduct.

How many weights are hanging to some christians!

There is the love of the world. Instead of subordinating the acquirement of the things of this world to the salvation of their souls they are doing just the opposite. There is little they will not do to get wealth. They will act dishonestly and even stain their hands with the blood of their fellow-man to get it. Men cannot serve God and mammon at one and the same time. “If a man love the world the love of the Father is not in him.”

How few are running this race with patience and perseverance!

They serve God by fits and starts—serve Him to-day but forsake Him to-morrow. The athlete continues to run as he started. Had he not continued to do so, he would not have won the prize. Just so must the Christian do. “He that endureth

to the end shall be saved." Peter refers to the man that does not persevere in the christian race when he declares that "It is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

The subject affords encouragement. The athletes had encouragement. The thought of the prize encouraged them. Before them stood the judge holding the crown in his extended hand. Their eyes were upon it. So with the christian as he thinks of the crown that awaits the faithful servant of God.

Then the spectators encouraged the athletes; loved ones and friends cheered them. The christian is encompassed by a great cloud of witnesses. The church militant and the church triumphant, loved ones and friends here, loved ones and friends gone on before. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost encourage them. Angels and the redeemed encouraged them. But the christian has encouragement that the athlete did not have. The athlete ran the race alone. The christian is attended by the presence of Christ. The athlete ran the race in his own strength, the Christian is strengthened by Christ. His grace is sufficient for him.

Follow holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.—Heb. 12:14

MEN make a mistake when they suppose that their souls can be saved apart from holiness. THIS is just as impossible as it is for them to live without eating. I could not convince farmers that they could reap without preparing their soil, sowing their seeds and cultivating their plants. It is just as necessary for men to overcome sin in order that their souls may be saved as it is for farmers to prepare their soil, sow their seed and cultivate their plants in order to make a crop. The road to heaven is a holy road. Nothing unclean shall pass that way. The great trouble with some people is that they make the road to heaven too broad. They are like a man who, while passing over a bridge, thinks that it is broader than it really is, and as a consequence of his mistake he is drowned. The souls of some people sink into hell because they make the road to heaven too broad. The Apostle declares that without holiness men shall not even see the Lord. Our Saviour taught substantially the same truth, when He said, “Verily, verily, I say unto you except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. It is as necessary for God to sanctify men as it is for Him to

justify them. It is not the guilt of men that makes this world a world of sorrow. It is their sin. It is not the guilt of men that destroys their souls. It is their sin. If God should receive into His bosom a vile sinner He would destroy the most glorious attribute of His being—His holiness. If He would not allow so much as a beast to touch the mount as He talked to the children of Israel, how could He permit a vile sinner to enter His presence and remain there forever? Under such circumstances neither God nor the sinner could be happy.

There are many passages of Scripture that show the necessity of holiness.

The Bible teaches the following truths in regard to holiness:

1. It teaches first that God's servants were elected to holiness. Read these passages.—Rom. 8:9; I Thess. 4:7. Men make a mistake when they claim that since they have been elected to eternal life they may sin as freely as they please. If they were elected to eternal life they would avoid sin, not only because they would hate it, but because when God elected them to eternal life He elected them to holiness of life. He elected, not only the end, but the means. The servants of Christ are members of His body. Are the members of Christ's body unholy? The Church of Christ is His bride. Is the bride of Christ impure?

2. The Bible teaches in the second place that God's servants have their fruits unto holiness. Rom. 6: 22. Their fruits were once unto sin. Their fruits are now unto holiness. "Ye shall know them by their fruit. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so, every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit." When a tree is in a flourishing condition, it brings forth, not only leaves, but fruit. Just so, every true servant of God brings forth not only leaves of profession, but fruits of righteousness.

3. The Bible teaches in the third place that the character of Christ is the standard of holiness. Rom. 8: 29. If you are not being gradually conformed unto His image you are not His servant. If the conduct of many professed Christians was brought to this test it could not begin to stand it. Think of Jesus Christ as profaning God's name, as desecrating His Sabbath, as indulging in intoxicating drinks and as dealing dishonestly with His neighbor.

4. The Bible teaches in the next place that holiness is necessary to the proper worship of God. Ps. 24: 34. Math. 5: 23-24. 1 Tim. 2: 8. Ps. 15: 1, 2, 3. Your worship is only outward if your hands are soiled with unjust dealing towards your fellow-man, if your hearts are impure, if you exercise an unforgiving spirit towards your neighbor and if you doubt the promises of God. Our hearts must

be right in order that our lives may be right. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. No disease is more dangerous than heart disease. However beautiful may be the face of a watch if its works within are out of order it will not keep good time. Just so, however beautiful may be the outward walk of men if their hearts are wrong they cannot render acceptable worship to God.

5. The Bible teaches in the next place that God's servants are created in holiness. Eph. 4: 24. They have put off the old man as they would put off an old garment. They have put on the new man as they would put on a new garment. Notice that the Apostle descends to particulars. If you are God's servant you have put away lying, you permit not the sun to go down on your wrath, you give not place to the devil, you do not steal, and you do not permit any corrupt communication to proceed out of your mouth. Eph. 4: 25-29.

6. The Bible teaches next that God's servants have presented their bodies to God in holiness. Rom. 12: 1. The fall affected both the body and soul of man. So does sanctification. If we are God's servants our bodies are instruments, not of unrighteousness, but righteousness. We have placed ourselves upon the altar of God.

Here are some of the marks of holiness. If you are holy you love God, not only because of what He has done for you, but also because of the purity

of His character. With the Psalmist you can exclaim, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none on earth that I desire beside Thee." He is to you Chief among ten thousand—the One altogether lovely.

Again, if you are holy you love the Word of God, not merely because of the promises it contains, but because of its purity. The Word of God is the copy of His character. If you love the original, you love its copy. If you are holy, you can say with the Psalmist, "Thy Word is very pure, therefore Thy servant loveth it." Again, you can say, "Oh, how I love Thy law; it is my meditation all day."

Again, if you are holy, you delight in the duties of holiness toward God and your fellow-man. This follows from what has been said. If you love God, you will discharge the duties that you owe Him. If you love His Word, you will do what it tells you. It tells you to love your fellow-man. He who loves God loves his fellow-man. "If a man say, I love God and hateth his brother, he is a liar."

Again, if you are holy, you practice habits of holiness. You avoid sin in every form. The Apostle teaches that it is against the nature of the christian to sin.

"We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not." While a man may drink poison or break his limb it is against his nature to do so. It

is as much against the nature of a servant of God to sin as it is against the nature of a dove to eat a carcass or of a wolf to eat grass. If you are a servant of God you hate sin not merely because of its consequences, but because of its heinousness.

The Word of God, however, does not teach that men can live entirely without sin. It teaches that we can and should be relatively holy, but it does not teach that we can be absolutely holy.

When the Son of God commanded His disciples to keep His commandments He knew that they could not keep them perfectly. He taught this when He reminded the man who called Him good Master that there was none good except God. If no other words could be quoted to prove that men cannot live entirely without sin these words of the Saviour would be sufficient. The commandments cannot be kept perfectly because they reach the thoughts of men. Our Saviour taught this when He said that if a man looked upon a woman to lust after her he committed adultery already with her in his heart. John taught that the commandments reach the thoughts of man when he declared that he who hates his brother is a murderer. The Bible teaches this, for it tells us that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Men who claim that they live above sin do not realize the heinousness of sin. The sin that is specially abominable in God's sight is the sin that is within. Outward sin is nothing

in comparison to inward sin. You can no more estimate it than you can estimate the salt of the ocean.

The word of God teaches plainly that the best men of all ages sinned and confessed their sin. We are told that Noah was perfect and upright in his generation. But did he not on one occasion get beastly drunk? Abraham was called the friend of God. But did he not lie about his wife? While David was called a man after God's own heart, he committed murder and adultery. While God declared that Job was a perfect and an upright man, Job uttered such words as these: "If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me; if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse. If I wash myself with snow water and make my hands never so clean, yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch and mine own clothes shall abhor me. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." But says some one, these men lived under the old dispensation. Let us consider some who lived under the new dispensation. The Apostle Paul declared that he was less than the least of the Apostles, later that he was less than the least of all saints, later that he regarded not himself as perfect, and still later—near the close of his life—that he was the chief of sinners. The Apostle John penned such words as these: "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." Again, "If we say we have not sinned we make Him a liar,

and His Word is not in us." They tell us that these passages refer to the unconverted. Why, then, did the Apostle include himself. "If we say we have no sin."

The trouble with the people who claim that they can and do live sinless lives is that they place the wrong meaning on certain words and the wrong construction on certain passages.

They quote such passages as these: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

"Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?" "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification."

Perfect in these passages refers to outward conduct. While every horse is a perfect horse, every horse is not a faultless horse. A tree can be a perfect tree and yet be immature. A christian can be a perfect christian and still not be mature. God could not have meant that Job was sinless, for Job, as has been seen, declared that he was not.

Sanctification does not mean sinlessness. To sanctify means to separate from a common to a sacred purpose. The Apostle Paul called those to whom he wrote saints and yet he reproved them for sin.

Let us notice these passages, quoted by those who teach that men can live without sin. "Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not ; whosoever sinneth, hath not seen Him, neither known Him." "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." John in these passages refers to habitual sin. Many to whom he wrote believed that because they lived under the gospel dispensation they could sin as freely as they pleased. The Apostle taught them by these words, that they who were born of God did not habitually sin. No christian does this. Again these words refer to the new nature. The servant of God has two natures, an old nature and a new nature. With the old nature he sins, with the new he does not sin. John refers to the old nature when he says, "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." This old nature will not be eradicated until death. Paul declared that in his flesh was no good thing.

The Lord's Prayer teaches that men cannot live entirely without sin. One of the petitions of that prayer is, "Forgive us our sins." Our Saviour knew when He gave His disciples this prayer that they would always have occasion to offer that petition. One of the elements of prayer is confession. Men who do not confess their sin, do not pray. The man who boasts that he lives a sinless life is a spiritually

proud man. In his estimation he is better than other men. The parable of the Pharisee and publican shows how the Saviour regarded the spiritually proud man. He condemned the Pharisee. He commended the publican. He declared that the publican who smote upon his breast and exclaimed, "God be merciful unto me a sinner," went down to his house justified rather than the Pharisee. Jesus gives the reason why he went down to his house justified rather than the other man. These are His words. "For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased: and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." Humility is one of the most essential traits of christian character. Our Saviour declared on one occasion that unless men humbled themselves like little children they could not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Experience teaches that we cannot live sinless lives. There is not a christian living but whose heart tells him that he sins. Observation teaches that there is no person but who sins. Who can say, "I know a person who does not sin?"

The Word of God teaches us that we all sin. Read these passages. Prov. 20: 9; Rom. 8: 7; Gal. 5: 17; Phil. 3: 12; Rom. 7: 10-25.

He is not here but is risen

—Luke 24: 6

THESE words were spoken by two angels whom certain women found at the tomb of the Saviour. We are told that on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came unto the tomb, bringing spices which they had prepared.

Notice some proofs of the resurrection of Christ.

1. The fact that no proof can be given to show that He is not risen is a proof that He has. There are two or three theories as regards the resurrection of Christ held by His enemies.

1. The position of the Jews as regards the matter is that Christ's disciples stole his body. If their position was that Christ was alive, and that His disciples endeavored to deliver Him out of the hands of His enemies, it would not appear so absurd, but that they placed themselves under very dangerous circumstances to get a dead body is something that we cannot begin to believe. Had they made any effort to get it they would certainly have been apprehended. Their movements were closely watched, not only by the Roman soldiers, but by thousands of others. Every one was anxious to know what would be the final issue of all that had

taken place. They could not have wished to make the body more secure, for it was far more secure than they could have made it. It was placed in a tomb that was hewn out of a solid rock. A heavy stone was rolled to its mouth. The king's seal was placed upon it and Roman soldiers were stationed around it. It is absurd to say that the soldiers were asleep. They were paid to say that His disciples stole the body while they were asleep. But if they were asleep, how did they know that the body was stolen? Had they fallen asleep they would have brought upon themselves the penalty of death provided by the Roman military law. If they stole the body of Christ, what explanation can be given of the effect that His resurrection made upon their lives? Would they have preached a lie as earnestly and faithfully as they did the fact of Christ's resurrection? Would they have preached a lie in the face of persecution? Would they have gone from one country to another, and would they have laid down their lives, knowing that they were preaching what they knew was false?

But if they stole the body of Christ, the Roman soldiers should have been put to death in accordance with the Roman military law and the disciples should have been arrested and punished.

But no effort was made to punish either the Roman soldiers or the disciples.

2. Another position held by the enemies of Christianity as regards the resurrection of Christ, is that He was not dead—that He was in a swoon and came out of the tomb.

Let us suppose that He was not dead. We gather from the sacred record that He hung upon the Cross for about six hours with nails driven through His hands and feet. After He was treated thus, how could He have rolled back the great stone and come out of the grave? How could He have in His weak condition passed the Roman soldiers? But He was dead.

His enemies were determined to put Him to death. We are told that as the Jewish Sabbath was near, the soldiers were anxious to dispose of the bodies and requested Pilate to hasten their death by having their legs broken. They broke the legs of the thieves, but when they came to Jesus they broke not His legs because they saw that He was dead already. One of the soldiers pierced His side and straightway there came out blood and water. The fact that blood and water flowed from His side is a proof that He died. Any physician will tell you this.

We are told that Pilate was not willing to give His body to Joseph until he *knew* that it was dead and that when he knew of the Centurion that the body was dead he gave it to Joseph. Had there been any signs of life about the body Joseph would have

seen them. But the sacred record tells us that after he had hung upon the cross for six hours with nails driven through his feet and hands, He cried with a loud voice, bowed His head and gave up the Ghost.

3. Another position held by the enemies of Christianity as regards the resurrection of Christ is that His disciples were deceived—that they did not really see Him.

(a) The many times that He appeared to them is a proof that they were not deceived. He appeared to the women, to Peter, to two of His disciples while they were on their way to Emmaus, to His disciples in the upper room at Jerusalem, to them at the Sea of Tiberias in Galilee, on a mount in Galilee, and to above five hundred brethren at once. Had He appeared to two or three at different times we would not find so much difficulty in believing that they were deceived. But how could over five hundred persons be deceived at one and the same time?

(b) Their doubtful state of mind prevented them from being deceived. Although our Saviour told them several times that He would be crucified and that He was to rise from the grave, they did not expect Him to rise. Their conversation after His death showed that they had given up all hope of His rising from the grave.

Yet when they saw Him, they believed that He actually came out of the grave.

Even Thomas who was of a more doubtful state of mind than any of them, when he saw Him, exclaimed, "My Lord and My God."

Had they been a set of credulous fanatics, who had predicted that He would rise again, and who were anxious for Him to rise, we would have some grounds for believing that they were deceived. But as has been stated, they did not believe that He would rise again.

(c) Their association with Him when He was living prevented them from being deceived. They were with Him three years, walked and talked with Him, ate with Him. With no one were they more closely associated.

How could they have been deceived then?

4. Another proof of Christ's resurrection is afforded by prophecy. David prophesied the resurrection of Christ when he said, "For thou will not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."

The Saviour predicted His death and resurrection. He told His disciples that as Jonah was in the whale's belly three days and three nights, so would He be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth—that the Scribes would deliver Him into the hands of the Gentiles, they would crucify Him, but that at the expiration of three days and three nights,

He would come out of the grave. "Destroy this temple (referring to His body), and in three days I will raise it up."

III. The rapidity with which the borders of the church were extended affords another proof.

IV. The good that the preaching of the fact of the resurrection accomplished affords another.

What truths naturally flow from this doctrine?

1. That we have a living Saviour. He intercedes for us. He will be with us at all times.

2. That He has conquered death and the grave for God's people.

3. That life and immortality have been brought to light.

4. There is a home for God's people beyond the grave.

5. That their bodies will rise again and be fashioned like unto His glorious body.

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.—Prov. 22:6

HOWEVER much wealth men may accumulate, however many honors they may attain, however successful they are in other respects, if at last the souls of their children are lost their lives are a failure. Whatever parents neglect, they should discharge the duties they owe their children. A mother should not allow her household duties, or her social duties, or her duties to her church to interfere with her duties to her children. If a father must neglect his farm, or the duties of his office, in order to train his children properly, he should do so. If the souls of your children are lost it would have been better if you or they had never been born. The words of our text are a command. It is not merely a privilege to train our children in the way they should go. It is a duty. If we do not do so we bring guilt upon our souls.

I. The Command: “Train up a child in the way he should go.” Not in the way he would go, but in the way he should go. While the words in the original read, “Train up a child according to his way,” they really mean that he should be trained in the right way—in the way he should go.

1. Parents should give their children the proper physical training. If they neglect the physical training of their children their usefulness will be impaired and they may be brought to premature graves. Parents should see to it, that their children eat proper food, take a sufficient amount of exercise, wear proper clothing, and receive a sufficient amount of sleep. It is criminal for parents to be careless and indifferent as to the physical condition of their children. How many will hire careless and indolent women to nurse their children and concern themselves very little as to how they are treated! How many require their children to do work that is difficult for grown people to do! How many will allow their children to injure their health by confining themselves too closely to their studies! Children should be educated, but they should not be allowed to endure hardships, and to make sacrifice in securing an education that will bring injury to their health.

2. Parents should train their children intellectually. Education is next in importance to their spiritual and eternal interest. All children should be well educated. Parents who will not educate their children should be forced to do it. Compulsory education is not a bad thing. If parents who attach little or no importance to the education of their children were compelled to educate them, both the Church and State would be better off. If you refuse to educate your children you greatly impair

their usefulness in life. They may all of their days be compelled to labor beside common laborers. There is no excuse for any one to neglect the education of his children.

3. Parents should train their children morally. Great importance should be attached to the education of our children, but greater importance should be attached to their morals. However well you educate your children, if you neglect their morals you have done them a great injustice. If you neglect to train your children morally, education will be an instrument in their hands to do harm. To train your children morally means to teach them the Ten Commandments—to teach them that they commit great sins when they disobey their parents, profane God's name, desecrate His Sabbath, tell falsehoods and act dishonestly. It is exceedingly necessary for our children to practice good habits, for the reason that the habits that they contract and practice now will follow them through their lives. St. Augustine declared that habits unresisted become a necessity.

That we may train our children morally, we should guard their reading. We should not allow them to read dime novels, infidel literature and criminal news. Bad books are bad companions.

Again, we should not allow our children to be taught by godless teachers. The influence that a teacher exerts over his pupils is exceedingly great. A godless teacher once labored for an hour to con-

vince one of his pupils that there was no truth in the religion of Christ. The teacher afterward became a drunkard and died one. The young man soon afterward died and his mother greatly feared that his soul was lost because of the influence exerted over him by his godless teacher.

4. Parents should train their children religiously and spiritually. It is necessary for us to train our children physically, morally and intellectually, but it is far more necessary for us to train them religiously and spiritually. When a woman asked Charles Wesley when she should begin to train her child, he asked her how old was her child. When she replied that it was six months old, he said, "Madam, you have lost six months." This should be done early in the lives of our children. It is a mistake to say that the minds of children should not be biased as regard religious truth. You do not wait until the weeds in your garden have become mature before you uproot them. Then why should you wait until the weeds of sin have taken a stronghold in the soil of the hearts of our children before you attempt to remove them? Some parents refuse to let their children unite with the church when they express a desire to do so. Let us be careful, lest when we refuse to let our children unite with the church we bring upon ourselves the condemnation that Christ pronounced upon those who offend one of the little ones. A prominent minister once said to a man who

was hesitating about letting his son unite with the church. "As soon as a child is old enough to know that he is a sinner and that he needs a Saviour, he is old enough to give his heart to Christ." If your child is old enough to love, trust and obey you, he is old enough to love, trust and obey God. There are four ways in which we may train our children religiously and spiritually.

1. We may do so by precept. Notice God's words to the children of Israel. "And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shall talk of them when thou sittest in thine house and when thou walkest by thy way and when thou liest down and when thou risest up." Originally the head of the house was the priest. Even after the Levitical priesthood was established he was the prophet, priest and king of the home. He was expected to give religious instruction unto his children. But let us remember that the religious instruction of children rests equally upon the father and mother. The father has no right to turn the religious instruction of the children over to the mother, nor has the mother a right to turn it over to the father. We are told that God made man in His own image and that male and female created He them. One was not sufficient without the other. Both were needed. In many homes the mother alone instructs religiously the children and in many

homes the reverse is true. Notice the words of God—"and *thou* shalt teach them." The father and mother should not relegate the religious instruction of their children to the minister or Sabbath school teachers. Even if the pastor and the Sabbath school teachers are more capable of instructing your children than you are, the duty to instruct them rests upon you—"and *thou* shall teach them." The words teach us that we should diligently teach our children religiously. We should be as faithful in giving them religious instruction as we are in making them a livelihood. No duty of a secular or religious nature should prevent us from attending to the religious and spiritual welfare of our children. Then the duty should be discharged constantly. Note the words. Day in and day out we should do so. At all times, when we are sitting in our homes, when we are walking by the way, the duty rests upon us. David neglected the religious instruction of his children. What was the result?

2. We may do this by discipline. It is a mistake for parents to let their children do as they please. One great difference between Abraham and Eli was that while Abraham commanded his children, Eli simply remonstrated with his. But what was the consequence as regards the conduct of each? God blessed Abraham and his seed after him, but he removed from the house of Eli the priestly office. Parents should not only teach their children religious

truth, but they should see to it that they put it in practice.

Suppose a soldier should only read a pamphlet on how to use arms? Would he be a good soldier? No. He must practice the principles he has learned. Just so, that children may be godly men and women, they must not only be taught the truths of God's Word, but they must practice them. Do you wish your children to be patient? Then not only teach them that it is their duty to be patient, but see to it that they exercise patience. Do the same as regards generosity, truthfulness, honesty, reverence for God's name and His Sabbath.

3. By example. We cannot expect our children to do what we do not do or to avoid what we do not avoid. How inconsistent would the conduct of a captain be if while he is leaning over he should tell his soldiers to stand erect? What would you think of a minister whose conduct was contrary to what he taught his people? Then how inconsistent are parents when they expect their children to do what they do not do. If you wish your children to observe the Sabbath you must observe it yourself. One respect in which David failed in his duty to his children was to set them a good example. He committed murder and adultery. His children followed his example. Children are very apt to be like their parents.

4. That parents may train their children religiously and spiritually, they must erect an altar to God in their homes. This is one thing that many of God's people of old did. Wherever their tents were cast they erected an altar to God. Thus did Abraham and Isaac. You say that you have not time. You should take time. You would lose time by not doing so. You say that you do not know how. You should learn how.

Nothing is more necessary for us to do than to lead our children to Christ. If they should be taken away from us and we should realize that we had failed to do our duty to them, and that their souls were lost, great would be our sorrow.

The Good Samaritan

—Luke 10:29-37

OUR Saviour by this parable teaches us what neighbor love is. We cannot separate love for God and love for our fellow-man. "He that saith that he is in the light and hateth his brother is in darkness even until now." This parable was given by our Saviour in answer to a question asked Him by a lawyer as to who his neighbor was.

The parable is substantially this:

While a man was travelling a road that led from Jerusalem to Jericho, he fell among thieves and was robbed and wounded and left half dead.

A certain priest came down that way and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. The priest made no effort to relieve the suffering of the unfortunate man. After a time a Levite came to the place and treated the unfortunate man as did the priest. But when a certain Samaritan came to the place and saw the man, he had compassion upon him, bound up his wounds, pouring on them oil and wine, set him on his beast, brought him to an inn and took care of him.

The man who proved to be a neighbor unto the unfortunate man was not the priest or the Levite,

but the Samaritan. He showed by his treatment of the unfortunate man what neighbor love is.

I. His kindness in the first place was one of Spirit rather than of letter. This was the difference between him and the priest and the Levite. Had they read a command to the effect that if they ran across a man who had been robbed and wounded and left half dead, it would be their duty to minister to him, they would have done so, but since they knew of no such command they passed by on the other side. Their kindness would have been of the letter rather than of the Spirit. There is a great difference between kindness of Spirit and kindness of letter. The former is rendered with the heart, the latter with the hand. The former is rendered through love, the latter only from sense of duty. Charity is sometimes given to people as a bone is thrown to a dog. There is no love in it. Money is sometimes given to men with no more politeness than hay is given to a horse.

II. The good Samaritan ministered to the unfortunate man though he was of different nationality from himself.

The unfortunate man was a Jew. The Jews were prejudiced against the Samaritans, and the Samaritans against the Jews. This man did not allow his prejudice against the Jews to prevent him from ministering to the Jew that had been robbed. It was sufficient for him to know that he was in

need. We may well be afraid that many allow their prejudice against the negro to prevent them from ministering to him. He is depraved, but he is not so depraved, that the Son of God cannot save him. However depraved he may be, the Saviour loves him. If we do not love his soul, we do not love the Saviour. Think of the Son of God as refusing to minister to the negro for fear of putting himself on social equality with him. While Jesus does not love the ways of the negro He loves his soul.

True love knows no difference between white and black, Caucasian and Mongolian, rich and poor when they are in need. The Apostle Paul declared that he was debtor to all men.

III. The good Samaritan ministered to the unfortunate man though he was of a different religion from himself. He did not require him to accept his doctrinal views before ministering to him. His duty was plain. He discharged it in the fear of God.

It is a mistake to refuse to help the needy because they are not members of your church or because they are not servants of God. We are told to do good unto all men. If you should see a man's house on fire you would not require him to repeat the Apostle's creed before you would help him to put out the fire. While it is the duty of a church to take care of their poor, their benevolence should

not be restricted to their own denomination. We were christians before we were denominationalists, and we were men before we were christians.

IV. The good Samaritan did not allow consideration of his convenience to prevent him from ministering to the unfortunate man. He, perhaps, was a poor man himself. He did not contend that he was too poor to help the man that was in such great need. He realized that it was his duty to do all that he could for him. There are many people who give little to the benevolent causes of the church. They give, but they do not deny themselves. They give, but they give only that which they have no use for. Some one tells of a rich church that sent a cast-off box of clothing to a faithful minister of the gospel.

Again, this man might have said that he did not have time to minister to the unfortunate man—that if he did not hasten he would not reach home before night.

There are many people who refuse to give their time to God. Let us remember that our time as well as our means belongs to God. It was said of the Corinthians that they gave themselves to God.

The good Samaritan might have said that if he should be seen near the unfortunate man he would be suspected of robbing him, or he might have said that he might fall into the hands of the robbers himself. How many people fear man rather

than God! They give but they do so from a selfish motive. They do so in order to secure the good opinion of men or some coveted position.

V. The Samaritan ministered to the unfortunate man notwithstanding the unkind feelings he exercised towards him. The helpless man was a Jew. The Jews were enemies of the Samaritans. They had no dealings with them. They called them dogs. Though this Jew was an enemy of the Samaritan, he ministered to him. He obeyed this injunction of the Saviour, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you."

VI. The Samaritan did not allow the peculiar circumstances of the unfortunate man to prevent him from ministering to him. He had been stripped of everything that he had. He was in a destitute condition. Sometimes we allow circumstances that should influence us to help people to prevent us from doing so. The poorer people are, the more ready should we be to help them. But just the opposite is true of some people. They will not speak to poor people, much less will they help them. The Son of God was specially interested in poor people. One of the proofs of His Messiahship was that He preached the gospel to the poor. He was poor himself. The Samaritan might have said that the

man brought the trouble on himself—that he was in a drunken condition when he fell among the robbers.

Many people refuse to help unfortunate people on the ground that they brought suffering on themselves.

What would have become of us had God dealt thus with us? Let us deal with needy ones as did the Samaritan with the man who fell into the hands of thieves.

Historical Sketch of the Westminster Assembly

THE meeting of the Westminster Assembly was a necessity. As we read of the cruel persecutions that were inflicted for years upon God's people by reason of the power that was exercised by kings and queens in ecclesiastical matters, we cannot do otherwise than come to this conclusion.

As this paper must be confined within the limits of a few minutes, much that confirms the statement that the meeting was a necessity must be left unsaid.

However, some events that transpired in connection with the Church of England during the reigns of James I and Charles I, show that the statement is not groundless. When James I ascended the throne the Puritans believed that their sufferings would be alleviated, since he had been educated in the Protestant faith, according to the Presbyterian standard, as then established in Scotland. But his conduct soon convinced them that he would do nothing to lift the yoke which had so long rested heavily upon them.

A petition for redress was sent to him by the Puritans. Counter petitions were sent by the

Prelatic party. At Hampton Court, where a conference was held, the king acted in such a way as to lead the persecuted Puritans to believe that he was one of their bitterest enemies.

After their objections to certain features and customs of the Church of England had been stated he uttered these words: "If this is all your party have to say I will make them conform, or I will harry them out of this land, or else worse."

A refusal to observe such ceremonies as the Puritans disapproved was treated as a gross sin. James' persecuting measures to enforce uniformity of worship would have been more successful had he not disregarded the privileges of Parliament and the rights of his subjects. When Parliament was unmanageable he attempted to rule without their aid. He replenished his treasury by illegal methods of taxation. The Puritans became popular. Parliament sympathized with them and adopted their opinions. Puritans were elected as members of Parliament.

The struggle for religious liberty was now carried on by a powerful party. The conduct of the next king—Charles I—tended to make it more powerful.

Seeing that his wishes were opposed by Parliament he endeavored to dispense with that assembly and rule as an absolute monarch. For twelve years no Parliament assembled, and money was raised for

the king's treasury by illegal methods of taxation. The king's conduct awakened a feeling of indignation among all parties who loved liberty. Wentworth, one of the king's counselors, and Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, determined to place despotism on a sound basis. Men who denounced evils that were practiced by the National Church were brutally treated. Great dissatisfaction prevailed on account of the enormities that were committed in the name of law and religion. About this time the king determined to force prelacy upon Scotland. He soon discovered that he had undertaken a difficult matter.

The liturgy which he commanded to be prepared and to be read in Scottish churches became exceedingly unpopular, after an infuriated woman—Jennie Geddes—hurled the long-remembered stool at the head of the clergyman who attempted to read it in the pulpit of the Church of St. Giles. The Scotch were very indignant.

A document was drawn up known as the Solemn League and Covenant, in which signers pledged to labor for the extirpation of popery, prelacy, heresy, superstition and other things that were a hindrance to the reformation of the church. It was sent into all parts of the kingdom. The king, regarding the movement as rebellion, marched at the head of an army to suppress it. No sooner had he reached Scotland than he found that he had an army to con-

tend with more powerful than his own. After proposing terms of peace he returned to London. He was driven to the necessity of calling a meeting of Parliament by reason of the expense of his campaign. Parliament, having refused to grant supplies unless there was a redress of grievances, the king dismissed it and again raised money by illegal methods of taxation.

The Scotch, having heard that he had violated his terms of peace with them, renewed war with him.

He was compelled to call a Parliament and yield to their demands. They stripped him of so much power that he determined to contend for his rights by the use of the sword.

About this time petitions were sent from various parts of the kingdom, urging a reformation of the church and the abolition of the hierarchy as established. The resolution to abolish the hierarchial system and call an assembly of divines as an advisory court passed both houses of Parliament September 1, 1640. November 5, 1643, was designated as the day when the government of the church by archbishops, bishops, deans, chapters, etc., should cease.

In the following June an ordinance was passed, calling an assembly to meet at Westminster July 1, 1643. The assembly was composed, at first, of one hundred and twenty-one divines, ten lords

and twenty commons. All of these were communicants in the Church of England, and all the ministers had received Episcopal ordination.

Parliament deeming it well to have the Church of Scotland represented, sent commissioners to Edinburg, and invited the General Assembly and the Convention of Estates to send representatives to Westminster. The Scotch so greatly feared prelacy, that the only condition on which they consented to accept the invitation, was that the Parliament and the Assembly adopt the Solemn League and Covenant.

After this document was signed by Parliament and the Assembly, the Church of Scotland sent six representatives to Westminster. They engaged in the debates but were not allowed to vote.

The Confession and other standards of the Presbyterian Church were adopted by members of the established Church of England. There was no objection, either among the members of Parliament or the members of the Assembly, to any of the doctrines contained in the Westminster Confession and Catechism. If there were any among the members of these two bodies besides Calvinists, it was not known.

Every one before taking his seat in the Assembly was required to take a vow to the effect that he would not maintain anything in point of doctrine but what he believed to be most agreeable to the

Word of the Lord, nor in point of discipline but what he conceived to conduce most to the glory of God and the good and the peace of His church.

That there might be a form of church government generally accepted, members of each denomination were selected. After the Solemn League and Covenant was signed, there were in the Assembly no direct supporters of prelacy. Most of the members of the Assembly favored the Presbyterian form of church government. The Erastians formed a second party. They held that all discipline belonged to the civil magistrate—that ministers should only teach and administer the sacraments. They had powerful friends in Parliament, but met with little favor in the Assembly. It is natural that they should have found friends in Parliament. Having suffered so much from prelatic tyranny, they greatly feared all ecclesiastical power. Moreover, their desire to have all power in their own hands greatly influenced them to favor the views of the Erastians.

The Congregationalists, a third party, controlled only twelve votes in the Assembly. Their position was that all power belonged to each separate congregation. Since church government was all that occasioned any controversy, let us take note of the proceedings of the Assembly in connection with that matter.

A short while after the House of Commons had taken the Solemn League and Covenant, and while

the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England were being discussed by the Assembly, they were ordered by both houses of Parliament to direct their attention to the important topics of discipline, a directory of worship and church government. Their first work, a directory of worship, was adopted by Parliament and substituted in many congregations for the liturgy of the Episcopal Church.

When the subject of church government was brought up for discussion, it was decided that they should consider first church officers.

Committees were appointed to prepare the subject for discussion. One of the committees reported that in inquiring after the officers belonging to the Church of the New Testament, they found that many of the names of church officers were attributed to Christ. Another committee reported that the following officers were mentioned in Scripture—Apostles, Evangelists, Prophets, pastors, teachers, bishops or overseers, presbyters and deacons. There was some opposition on the part of Goodwin, an influential Independent, but his objections were overruled and the reports approved.

The same committee reported that the office of the Apostles was declared to be only pro tempore and extraordinary for the seven following reasons: 1st. They were immediately called by Christ. 2nd. They had seen Christ. 3rd. Their commission was through the whole world. 4th. They were imbued

with the spirit of infallibility in delivering truths of the doctrine to the churches. 5th. They only by special commission were set apart to be personal witnesses of Christ's resurrection. 6th. They had power to give the Holy Ghost and were appointed to go through the world to settle churches in a new form appointed by Christ. 7th. They had the inspection and care of all churches. The only objection that was made to this report was made by Goodwin, and his objection was mainly as regards the power of the Apostles to settle churches. He saw that if he admitted this power, even in the Apostles, he would condemn the practice of Independents in forming themselves into churches and appointing their own officers. All the objections made to the reports of the committees were overruled and the reports were approved. The subject of ruling elders was next discussed by the Assembly. After a discussion of many days, a committee was appointed to draw up a statement as to how far all parties agreed. The report of this committee contained these propositions.

1. Christ hath instituted a government and governors ecclesiastical in His churches. 2. Christ hath furnished some in His churches with gifts for government and with commission to exercise the same when called thereto. 3. It is agreeable to and warranted by the Word of God that some others, besides the ministers of the Word should join with

the ministers in the government of the church. The first and second propositions were approved without opposition, and the third with only the negative vote of Lightfoot an Erastian. The office of the deacon was next discussed. Some were of the opinion that it was not permanent. When the Assembly decided that it was permanent there was only one negative vote.

Ordination and discipline was next discussed by the Assembly. On the 9th of January, 1644, the whole question of ordination was in the following words, stated by the chairman of one of the committees. 1. Ordination is the solemn setting apart of a person to some public office in the church. 2. It is necessarily to be continued in the church. 3. The Apostles ordained, Evangelists did, preaching elders did. Because Apostles and Evangelists are officers extraordinary and not to continue in the church, and since in Scripture we find ordination in no other hands we conceive that preaching elders are only to ordain. The first and second propositions and all of the third except the latter part of it were affirmed without much opposition. After the Assembly completed the doctrinal part of ordination, they proceeded to form a directory as to how it should be conducted. A committee was appointed to prepare it for debate. Their report was given in and ratified on the 19th of April, and the next day laid before both houses of Parliament.

Some alterations were made by Parliament, but after an address made to the Grand Committee of Lords, Commons and the Assembly condemning the alterations, the Assembly directory of ordination was returned unchanged. Presbytery was next discussed by the Assembly. The arguments for and against it, time will not permit us to notice. Suffice it to say that after a long and thorough discussion of the subject, a committee appointed to find out how far all parties agreed, gave in a report which showed that little more was necessary to bring about a complete agreement. Baillie in speaking of it, used the following words: "We have agreed on five or six propositions, hoping by God's grace to agree on more. They yield that a Presbytery, even as we take it, is an ordinance of God, which hath power and authority from Christ to call the ministers and elders or any in their bounds before them to account for any offence in life or doctrine, to try and examine the cause, to admonish and rebuke, and if they be obstinate, to declare them as heathen and publicans, and give them over to the punishment of the magistrates, also doctrinally to declare the mind of God in all questions of religion, with such authority as obliges them to receive their just sentences, and that they will be members of such fixed Presbyteries, keep the meetings, preach as it comes to their turn and join in the discipline after doctrine."

The Erastian controversy deserves our attention, but since this paper should not be concluded without an account of the last labors of the Assembly, this controversy must go unnoticed.

It was towards the close of the year 1644 that the Assembly began to make preparation for composing a confession of Faith and a Catechism. Little, however, was done in that direction till towards the end of May, 1645. The Shorter Catechism was laid before the House of Commons on the 5th of November, 1647, and the Larger on the 14th of April, 1648. On the 15th of September, 1648, an order was issued by Parliament commanding that they be printed for public use. There was little difference of opinion as to the doctrinal questions found in the Confession and Catechisms. These questions were carefully and prayerfully considered. Scripture proofs were added both to the Confession and Catechisms. Most of the members of the Assembly were Calvinists. There were, however, in the body Supralapsarians and Sublapsarians. But they did nothing but what they believed was in accordance with the Word of God and would tend to His honor and glory.

Though the king, by proclamation, forbade the Assembly, and though many dangers threatened them, they spared neither time nor effort to bring God's church from under the yoke of prelatic tyranny. When they met there were few theological

questions that had not been discussed. A more learned and conscientious body of men never met. Their views on doctrinal and ecclesiastical questions were the views of the wisest and purest men of that age, both in England and on the continent, after more than a century of earnest controversy. And their work, because it rests upon God's Word as its foundation, commands the highest admiration of all minds and hearts that are capable of appreciating its excellence.

When the Confession, Catechisms, form of government and discipline were laid before Parliament and adopted, the work for which the Assembly had been called was accomplished. This was all done after the Assembly had deliberated for more than four years.

Parliament required them to continue in session while they were negotiating with the king for the settlement of all church questions that they might give advice in any emergency that might arise.

They maintained their formal existence till the 22nd of February, 1649, about three weeks after the king's decapitation, having sat five years, six months and twenty-two days, during which time they held one thousand one hundred and sixty-three sessions.



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